

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

"WHATSOEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!"—Paul.

No. 2,017.—VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1919. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.
Post free, 10s. 6d. per annum

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Our Los Angeles contributor, Mr. B. M. Godsall, writing from Seattle on the 8th ult., touches on the subject of reincarnation, a topic which comes up appropriately in Mrs. Philip Ch. de Crespigny's article in our issue of 23rd ult. Mr. Godsall refers to that remarkable work, "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron, which seems to have taken the American public by storm, and he directs our attention to page 309 of the work in which the authoress quotes the reply of one of the communicating spirits to a question concerning reincarnation. Here it is:—

There is no possible reincarnation. That is a dream of the Orient. The idea of reincarnation is regressive. Not destructive, but deterrent. Not progressive. It is born of bodily desire.

Then follows another question from the authoress and the answer:—

"Is it like the desire of old men for youth?"

More. It is a mask covering material desire with spiritual semblance. It is taught from this plane by deterrent or partly deterrent forces lacking free vision.

Mr. Godsall remarks, "I know that the weight you attach to the authority of such communications is not crushing." True, on these speculative questions we regard no deliverance "from the other side," as final. Moreover, we remember that spiritual experiences are liable to distortion when expressed in material terms. Man as a physical being begins in Time and ends in Time—in that way we dispose of a parroted argument for reincarnation—but who shall lay down hard and fast laws about Man the Spirit?

Miss A. E. Grignon writes:—

In "Notes by the Way" in LIGHT of the 23rd ult., you ask that the Church of England should "state its position" with regard to Spiritualism "plainly and definitely"—a most reasonable request. But, unfortunately, the "responsible authority representing the Church" does not at present exist. It cannot exist until the Church is forced from its present bondage to the State and can acquire a voice of its own. Convocation does not adequately represent the Church and could not be taken as its mouthpiece—nor, of course, can individual bishops and clergy.

I would therefore beg all those readers of LIGHT who desire with you to know the mind of the Church, to use any power they may possess to back up the "Enabling Bill" when it comes before the House of Commons. When that Bill is passed it will be possible for the Church to set up the machinery necessary for enabling it to discover and express its own mind.

I may add that, as a Churchwoman, I hope that mind will not prove to be an anti-Spiritualist one.

Years ago we met a lady who was at that time an earnest and hardworking member of a church in a populous London suburb. She was a natural clair-

voyant, and related many remarkable instances of psychic phenomena through the mediumship of herself and members of her family connected with the same church. We inquired whether such things did not provoke hostility and criticism in an orthodox Church community. She appeared to be surprised at the suggestion, and we gathered that the attitude of mind excited amongst her associates was mainly one of sympathetic interest and a desire to know more of her gifts. It seemed natural enough when one came to investigate the matter. Her colleagues were quick to see that her psychic leanings, so far from affecting her devotion to religion, deepened her faith, strengthened her character and incidentally furnished evidence for the reality of the things in which they believed. After all, the average religious community is not half so unintelligent as some of the intellectual folk who write learnedly in Agnostic and Rationalistic publications would have us suppose.

Much, of course, depends on the manner in which our subject is presented. If it reaches the world in the guise of a newspaper scandal or is introduced in an eccentric fashion by some unbalanced enthusiast, Church member or otherwise, it receives but a poor welcome, so difficult is it for the average observer to discriminate between the person and the idea. Worthily presented, it makes no enemies except amongst that stagnant order of minds which opposes on general principles everything which it cannot understand. It is important to remember always how prone the world is to identify the message with the messenger. And a cause may suffer cruelly from its champions. We once listened in a London park to a lecture by an atheistic speaker. His arguments were challenged by a ruddy faced gentleman who, having announced himself as a champion of Christianity, proceeded to assail the orator with a torrent of profanity, and followed this up by threats of personal violence. The pious members of the audience listened with looks of horror and disgust, but the sceptics were filled with an unholy joy. It is a painful thing to be represented by an advocate who discredits the cause which he espouses. None has better reason to know this than the sober and judicious supporters of our own movement. But Truth is very robust; it is not subject to shivering fits, and emerges always unharmed, whether by the follies of its friends or the malice of its enemies.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

In addition to donations recorded in previous issues we have to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of the following sums:—

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The world naturally follows the positive man. Nothing was ever built on pure negations.—S. KNOWLSON.

All right imaginative work is beautiful, which is a practical and brief law concerning it. All frightful things are either foolish, or sick—visits of frenzy or pollutions of plague.—RUSKIN.

ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

By W. WHATELY SMITH.

One of the earliest and most important stages in the growth of any science is the classification of the facts with which it deals. The very birth of a new science is indeed the result of a process of classification—of a decision that certain phenomena possess attributes which differentiate them, to a greater or less extent, from all others, but also form connecting bonds between themselves. Nor is the process of classification ever complete. New classes or subdivisions of classes are distinguished and old ones amalgamated as knowledge increases, but until some sort of preliminary classification is satisfactorily effected it is impossible for organised study to begin or for material progress to be made.

In order to be of value the process of classification should always be carried out as far as possible on a basis of causation rather than appearance.

It may fairly be objected to this that such a classification pre-supposes a comparatively advanced understanding of the phenomena, and that it is therefore impossible in the very earliest stages. This is quite true, but the point I wish to make is that we should be constantly on the look-out for the chance of overhauling our classification and basing it more and more completely on the inner nature of the phenomena to be studied and less and less on their superficial characteristics.

Whenever we discover a new *vera causa* even of the most proximate nature we should try to see how far we can use it for purposes of classification.

The process is bound to be very difficult, especially in so complicated a subject as Psychical Research, because it is very seldom that one can be sure that a phenomenon is "pure"—attributable, that is, to one simple cause, and not a compound of two or more distinct elements. In general we are compelled to analyse compound phenomena into their components and treat the latter as our units for the purpose of classification.

It is, moreover, better to start on a modest scale, to distinguish a few main groups with comparative certainty and to leave a large number of doubtful phenomena unclassified, than to attempt to force every phenomenon into an elaborate scheme.

I think the time has come when we can profitably make a beginning and distinguish certain broad groups, as a guide for future work, and to say that certain phenomena, or elements thereof, are typical members of each.

Clairvoyance in space, for example, seems to me suitable for selection as typical of one such group. It is well authenticated and, so to speak, a "clean-cut" phenomenon.

We must not, of course, forget the possibility of its being sometimes combined with or simulated by some process of mind-reading by the clairvoyant, but I think there are sufficient cases on record where this is very unlikely to justify our accepting the phenomena as resulting from a fairly well established mental faculty. There is no need to import any question of "Spiritism" here—the faculty is probably explicable in metaphysical terms of the nature of space and the limitations of consciousness. Clairvoyance in time, if firmly established, is an even better example of this group, for the question of possible mind-reading is irrelevant to it. It will doubtless fall into line with space clairvoyance in the light of modern theories of relativity, which are leading physicists to the view that space and time are no more than arbitrarily differentiated aspects of a homogeneous four-dimensional manifold.

I should distinguish as members of another main class those phenomena whose proximate cause seems to be the extrusion from a medium of a plastic substance of physical or quasi-physical nature and peculiar properties. Crawford's work at Belfast is the *locus classicus* of this, and there seems to be reason to suppose that the same substance, or something very similar, is operative in the case of "Eva C.," described in Mme. Bisson's "Les Phénomènes dits de Matérialisation" and in Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's book on the same subject. There is some doubt as yet as to whether the whole of these latter phenomena are to be accepted as genuine, but the extrusion of a peculiarly constituted substance is at least strongly indicated.

It is probable that most, if not all, the phenomena known as "physical" will ultimately, and as regards some of their elements at least, be assigned to this group.

The next class is less easy of definition. I wish it to include all phenomena or elements of phenomena in which there arises any question of the identity of an intelligence, and I think we might say that the characteristic feature of the "units" to be assigned to it is an apparent change of personality—whether by way of substitution or of addition—on the part of the person studied.

Thus defined, the class will include not only the "identity-element" in all cases of ostensibly spiritistic communications received through mediums, but also those purely psychological and "mundane" automatisms sometimes observed in hysterical subjects under certain conditions and in addition all cases of multiple and cyclical personalities and apparent possessions.

It may be that when we know more of them we shall be able to distinguish two sub-divisions in this class—one in which the phenomena are due to genuine intervention *ab extra* and another in which the *prima-facie* appearance of each intervention is spurious.

But at present I do not think that this is feasible—at any rate not with sufficient certainty to be of any value, and for the present it is necessary to continue to study all such cases concurrently and in the light which each throws upon the others.

Another class which seems to be reasonably distinct from the others would include hallucinations, veridical dreams, visions at or near the moment of death, apparitions, and the like. Of such phenomena there are many hundreds of quite good examples. (Cf. "Phantasms of the Living," Myers' "Human Personality," and psychic literature generally.) At present these seem to hang together fairly well and to be readily distinguishable from the more characteristic members of other groups, although it is quite possible that some of them may have to be assigned, later, to other classes. In particular they may prove more closely related than I at present suspect with the last class of phenomena which I wish to mention, namely, the phenomena of "Telepathy," which latter should, I think, be regarded as a *vera causa* of considerable importance.

It is at least possible that some of the various forms of vision in the preceding class may need to be transferred to this last group on the ground that they are originated by some kind of telepathic stimulus which is "dramatised" by the percipient. But others, such as apparitions associated with definite localities, have probably a more objective source and deserve a class to themselves.

I think it possible that the foregoing may prove useful as the starting point for a skeleton system of classification and, particularly, in emphasising those aspects of the different types of phenomenon which are most worth studying.

Physical phenomena, for instance, should be approached from the side of the mechanism involved, and it is wise to eliminate from their study all question of the identity of the controlling intelligence. By so doing the problems involved are simplified and attention can be focussed on a single point instead of being diffused and wasted in an effort to deal with several distinct issues at once.

Conversely in the case of automatic writing, planchette, the ouija board, etc., the question of identity is all important and mechanism can be disregarded.

Again, in studying clairvoyant phenomena we should concentrate on trying to eliminate all possibility of telepathy or mind-reading and to secure unimpeachable evidence of pure televisual.

This process of eliminating non-essential aspects of phenomena from the field is one which should always be applied in the course of study, but it is often overlooked, with the effect of producing a most lamentable confusion of issues in the mind of the student.

JESUS CHRIST AND SPIRITUALISM.

We are now able to close this discussion with a brief rejoinder from the Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, merely observing that until Spiritualism becomes a religious sect (which Heaven forefend) it is in no position to issue any ukase as to what Spiritualists may or may not believe. Mr. Fielding-Ould writes:—

I have never been backward to admit and to rejoice in the earnestness and religious joy which Spiritualism has brought into innumerable listless and desolate souls. I have a drawer full of grateful letters from many parts of the world testifying to the personal gain of all kinds of people. But if Spiritualism officially denies the divinity of Christ it technically separates itself from Christianity, for there is no true Christianity apart from submission and homage to the Christ and a willing acceptance of His stupendous claims on our allegiance. It is not proved that it is the aim of the communicating spirits to bring about this severance, but it is obvious that this is the practical effect upon many hearers of their teaching. As a priest of the Church, I have felt it my plain duty to protest and to proclaim the truth, and to endeavour to stop the leak before it becomes a resistless river. That I should be lectured, reproved, scorned and patronised by the unbeliever fills me with delight. To answer their letters adequately would fill a whole copy of LIGHT, and I will take up no more space than is necessary to wish my opponents God-speed, and to remind them that the more wonderful, confounding, incredible and astounding a doctrine of God, the more probable it is that we are nearing the outer fringes of the truth.

F. FIELDING-OULD.

WE must not think of a series of exceptional and accidental occurrences in the life of Jesus. He did not do miracles so much as live miraculously.—STEPHEN GRAHAM, in "Priest of the Ideal."

THE theory that people are peaceful while Governments are warlike is one of those baseless figments of the imagination, one of those hopeless illusions, of the doctrinaire.—PROFESSOR HEARNshaw.

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"With eyes cleared of all the cobwebs," is the way the Rev. Walter Wynn asks us to look at the Bible in his new book, "The Bible and the After-Life" (Kingsley Press, Ltd., 10/6 net). He has produced a very notable work which might be aptly described in the words of the old writers as "a right valiant book." He was challenged, he tells us, to prove that there existed anything in the Bible resembling the psychic phenomena reported in "Rupert Lives!" This volume is his reply to the challenge. He has supplied an overwhelmingly full answer.

"My main object," he writes, "is to give to bereaved men and women who still believe in the Bible as God's greatest book, actual proofs from its contents that those loved ones they have lost are still living, promoted to higher spheres of service, and take a close interest in their welfare."

All who have been in touch with the literature of Spiritualism have at different times come across books that they felt sure could not fail to inspire belief. Full of insight, rich in records of tested and proved psychic phenomena, offering a key to many mysterious and baffling circumstances of daily life, these books appeared to be spiritual oases in the deserts of materialistic doubt and uncertainty. So they proved to be to some, but the great mass of people continued heedless in their old blind way. Mr. Wynn knows the impenetrability of crusted dogmatic ideas, and he says bluntly in his Preface that he asks his readers to listen to what the Bible says about the After-life, adding that if they are not open to conviction it would be well for them to close his book at once. What Mr. Wynn and other writers fail to recognise, however, is that open-mindedness—usually the sure precursor to fixed conviction—is a state that cannot be commanded at will by any man. It must be the result of growth. He himself, it is true, affords a mighty stimulus to that growth. It is only a little more than two years ago that he was seeking to test the truth of survival, as he relates in that vivid story of his experiences entitled "Rupert Lives!" Now he has advanced far along the road and he has produced a great and fearless book, the effect of which should be far reaching. It is a triumph of lucid thinking.

We are reminded, as Mr. Wynn takes up and examines book after book of the Bible, what a wonderful storehouse of spiritual truths it is; also, as he rightly points out, how the thoughtful student of the Bible is baffled at every turn unless he has a knowledge of those psychic laws that act as truly to-day as in the times of the Hebrew seers. The Woman at Endor is dealt with at length. The internal evidence of the story, he says, is absolutely convincing as to one point: the woman was not a fraud. "Armed by the record of the facts, I claim that this woman at Endor was not only a divinely-gifted one, but a good, generous and kindly genius, which is my tribute to other mediums in the modern world who are using their gifts to comfort, warn and bless others."

Here are some striking stories taken from the book:—

A SPIRIT TRAVELS 400 MILES IN TEN SECONDS.

Referring to the passage in Ezekiel "And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning," Mr. Wynn says:—

One thing stands out prominently: Our loved ones in the other world are able to move with the rapidity of thought. I have proved this to be true. In the presence of six competent witnesses I asked my son Rupert how long it would take him to go from Wood Lea, Stoney Ridge, Bingley, Yorkshire, to 26, Bellingdon Road, Chesham, Bucks, a distance of over 200 miles. The table was being controlled by two ladies, my wife and I and three other friends acting as witnesses. The answer came, "Five seconds there, five seconds back." I then asked my son to go and report to me something it was impossible for me or anyone in the room to know. Rupert himself could not know without going to see. Instantly the table became "dead" and instantly I began to count from one to fifteen. The opinion of the witnesses was that I counted too fast. I am now of the same opinion, but as I uttered the figure 15, a faultless answer, with other information, was given. Four hundred miles in ten seconds—what about this? "As the appearance of a flash of lightning"—thus "the living creatures move."

HAGAR THE PSYCHIC MAID.

How an "angel" came to the aid of Hagar is thus related:—

If only an account of the preservation of the life-history of Hagar, the Psychic Maid, Genesis should be studied. The pathos of it is equalled by the marvel of its psychical data. The poor girl, with her boy Ishmael, has to flee into the wilderness from the jealous Sarah—a divinely-ordered event, as most of the bitter events of life are. Hagar is about to leave her child to die, as she retires to shed her tears alone. "She lifted up her voice and wept." But an ear in the Invisible World caught the sound not only of the mother's, but the lad's crying, and a Direct Voice told Hagar what to do. Then follows this remarkable statement: "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of

water." How was that done? Would she have missed it had she not received an extra vision? The answer of the modern Spiritualist is brief and dogmatic in the affirmative, for he knows that some people possess seven senses. How thrillingly interesting the Bible becomes when rightly understood!

THE "ANGEL" AT BLACKPOOL.

The story of Hagar suggests a personal reminiscence. In 1918, Mr. Wynn went to Blackpool with his wife for a holiday, having been suffering from insomnia. He was a stranger to his hostess, who, however, on the first evening surprised him with the remark "You are being treated wrongly by your doctors. You do not suffer from what they say."

"How do you know I am ill?" I asked. "Oh, don't ask me now, but I am told by my spirit doctor to tell you to go up into the bathroom, take this cup of vinegar and empty it into half a bucket of hot water. Use that to the part. You will sleep to-night, and be another man by Christmas."

I laughed. "Madam," I said, "I have had the finest doctors in England to advise me. Surely I must obey them?"

"No; my spirit-doctor knows more than they. You do what I tell you."

I did. That night I slept, and by Christmas, 1918, all pain had gone and has not returned.

Mr. Wynn supplies the name and address of the lady. In his life, he says, she was the Psychic Maid through whom the "angel" spoke.

PHARAOH'S FIRM OF MASKELYNES.

Speaking of the "miracles" recorded in Exodus, Mr. Wynn says:—

When London papers report that Messrs. Maskelyne and Co. come forward with clever conjuring tricks to disprove psychic phenomena, Exodus is a source of comfort. Pharaoh ran an ancient firm of Maskelynes. They were clever magicians, and he called upon them to make Moses appear a fraud. They actually reproduced some of the phenomena, but the record is not without humour. They broke down just at the point that Moses triumphed. They could produce no "boils." Pharaoh was puzzled, disappointed, compromising and troubled. Yet he refused to believe. There was only one cure for him. You remember the story. It is a significant fact that Pharaoh's heart was hardened in order that God might show "my signs" before him (Exodus x. 1). This text deserves long and careful thought at the hands of Dr. Mercier.

Mr. Wynn interprets the Bible in the light of established psychic facts available to any of us at the present day, and, lo! the tangled expressions are straightened out, the hidden meaning is made clear, and deep and beautiful spiritual truths revealed in all their grandeur. It is not by any means the first time that such light has been thrown on the Bible records, but in the present book the author has done his work in an admirable way.

L. C.

MRS. E. R. RICHARDS (Devon) tells us that during the war a Yorkshire lady, anxious about her son who was missing, sent her a letter of his to psychometrise. As she held it she saw the young man going along a road which led to a big white gate. She got an impression of extreme weariness, but he called out, "Don't worry! I shall be all right." Sure enough he returned home, though after much suffering. He and others had been captured by the Germans and, after being kept for a month behind the firing line, were sent to Fort Macdonald (the "black hole" of Lille). Through insufficient food they were barely able to crawl, but they were on the road to the fort when Mrs. Richards held the lad's letter in her hand, and the way led through the gate which she saw.

To the uninitiated reader the collection of nineteenth century Hindustani Lyrics which have been rendered into musical English verse by Inayat Khan and Jessie Duncan Westbrook, and issued at 2/6 by the Sufi Publishing Society (86, Ladbroke-road, W.11), would be as puzzling as Shakespeare's Sonnets. Why, he would ask, should some four and twenty poets all conspire to portray in brief, passionate love lyrics the same mistress—peerless in beauty, but disdainfully cold and haughty and so indifferent to her lover's sufferings that she does not even trouble whether he lives or dies? He would regard it as a singularly unfortunate circumstance that not one of them was attracted to a sweeter, more gracious type of womanhood. The explanation that these poems do not deal with an earthly passion at all but symbolise the adoration of the soul for the veiled and withdrawn Deity would leave him still puzzled. He would still wonder whether a child's reverent trust in its Father would not be a better symbol of the soul's relation to God than the infatuation of some hapless youth for a beautiful mask which may hide nothing worthy of adoration. But this is merely Western prejudice. Regarded simply as poems these lyrics are exquisite—each a clear-cut polished gem of poetical expression.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.1.

The Alliance possesses the largest Library in existence of occult, mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription 21 1s. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

THE HUMAN SIDE.

It is possible that our attitude on questions which relate to the Churches may here and there be misunderstood. We say to ourselves in effect, "Here is LIGHT, a journal of psychical, occult and mystical research. That is its business, and not the discussion of questions relating to religious doctrine. If people wish to discuss these matters, well, there is a distinctively 'religious Press,' numbering several Church papers and others in which the prefix 'Christian' to the title of each sufficiently indicates their special purpose and purview." But with the influx of inquirers the question arises with painful frequency as to the attitude of Spiritualism to Christianity. Quite a number of good people, it seems, have been told that Spiritualism is anti-Christian, a statement decidedly curious in view of the fact that some of the most devoted followers of our subject are loyal members of the Christian Church, who find in psychic science an enlightening explanation of much in the Bible that is still dark to the ordinary Biblical commentator. But there are anti-Christian Spiritualists? Yes, indeed, and there are also anti-Christian Christians, people who wear the badge of Christianity, without showing any of the influence upon them of Christian teachings. Further, there is a vast number of people who follow Spiritualism but who belong to other religions. We meet some of these people on terms of equality and friendship, in this country. They are Spiritualists but—they are not Christians.

It is a very large question this when one takes a large view. Religion assumes many shapes, but in the end the whole matter is seen to come down to the individual concerned, and we may have to remark of some person, "He is not a Christian, no, but he is a *religious* Spiritualist." That is to say, he may be a devout Jew, Parsee or Mohammedan. It is not our place to criticise his particular form of religion. We may even privately hold the view that it is better he should be a good Jew, Parsee or Moslem than that he should be an indifferent Christian.

Very naturally our first interest is our own country and our own religion, a quite legitimate attitude. And looking at the question of our National Church, we find it necessary to take her in historical perspective. She has some old-fashioned ways; she is a little blind; she cannot travel as fast as we might like, but with all her shortcomings, she is our venerable mother. We may treat her a little snappishly at times, for we have our human infirmities, just as she has. We look back a few centuries and we see how in her own fashion she conserved what of religious instincts are left to us in these dolorous days. She retarded progress, which sometimes means merely mechanical efficiency, but she also retarded the advance of moral anarchy and wholesale materialism. In olden times we find her acting as the protector of the poor. She succoured and nourished them by the aid of her hospitals and monasteries until "bluff King Harry," lusting for spoil, "broke into the spence and turned the cows adrift." Yes, she defended the poor against their oppressors, for she had no fear of nobles or even of kings. She let loose her thunders against them indifferently, as holding a supremacy that was not of this world. Her priests and monks were guilty of abuses no doubt. Some of the monasteries were "no better than they should be," and bluff Hal took full advantage of the fact when he sent the monks packing and "annexed" their lands and dwellings. But the poor lost a friend. We will say nothing about the general purging of the Reformation, except that it must have been badly needed, or in the historical order it

would not have come. Good and bad went together in the general clearance and were succeeded by good and bad of a different kind. Many volumes have dealt with the theme from all points of view. We prefer to look at the matter as a whole, rather than to consider any purely partisan point.

We come down to later times, and we find Mother Church behaving still very humanly, opposing reforms she should have supported, losing sight of great causes and stickling for things really trivial. She has got very old now, but she is still doing something through the best of her sons and daughters to make life a little more human and liveable. Her churches, standing like beacons in the dark regions of crowded city life, do something to brighten and purify the conditions in which they abide. She numbers amongst her family some radiant souls, who give themselves to the service of humanity. But for the church and the mission room, some districts in our festering cities would have become corrupt beyond all remedy. That is one side of the picture. The other concerns priests who, like some of the monks, have brought her name into contempt. They have been worldly, venal, tyrannical, neglectful of their sacred charge. Their malpractices have stirred up a host of enemies who had some very real grievances, and it being the fashion of the world to hold an institution guilty of the crimes of any of its followers, the Church has been plentifully bespattered with abuse. Science took the field and was depicted by its admirers as an infant Hercules strangling the snakes of theological superstition. But even Science made some bad blunders, because, like the Church, Science also was a human institution. Growing very arrogant indeed, it included the idea of a life after death as one of the Church's superstitions. In this it was wrong, and is living to see its mistake. The Church was right after all, and it was right also in maintaining the truth of Religion.

In the Divine Economy, which has never left the world entirely to its own devices, Spiritualism arose to correct the blunders of both, and meeting with the treatment common to those who intervene in a quarrel, received the buffets and curses of each of the antagonists. Even yet it has not fully dawned on either of them that the new-comer may be the friend of both, able to reconcile their conflicting claims.

That is because Spiritualism is at once religious and scientific: it unites the two halves of the separated truth that must for ever quarrel until they have found that they are complementary to each other and not really antagonistic. But Spiritualism is equally a human institution, and must share in the kinship of frailty, however heavenly its origin. As with the Church and Science we can only deal with it by reference to the men and women who compose it. That is, of course, little more than a platitude, but it should be remembered by those who talk in a detached way of Spiritualism as being Christian or anti-Christian. As well ask whether Religion is scientific or anti-scientific, whether Science is religious or anti-religious. All one could say is that some religious men are on friendly terms with Science and others are distrustful of it; that some scientists are religious and others are enemies of religion. It would be different if we were dealing with Judaism or Materialism. There the anti-Christian and anti-Spiritualist attitudes are respectively defined on the face of each.

So we come back to our original view that whatever else all these things may be they are all human. And for the present we prefer to deal with the only "unity" that is all-inclusive—Humanity!

THE L.S.A. MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND.

The L.S. Council and LIGHT gratefully acknowledge the following donations received since those recorded in previous issues:—

	£	s.	d.
J. Fraser Hewes	10	10	0
Rev. Stanley Gordon	5	0	0
Mrs. Philip Ch. de Crespigny	1	1	0

THE NEW L.S.A. CENTRE.

AN APPEAL AND SOME SUGGESTIONS.

We have received from the Rev. Stanley Gordon the following letter, accompanied by a further subscription (his fourth) towards the L.S.A. Memorial Endowment Fund, for which we tender our grateful thanks:—

SIR,—I was interested in the statement given in *LIGHT* of August 9th as to the result of your appeal for £10,000 to provide a suitable home for *LIGHT* and the various activities of the Alliance. Until my recent visit to London I never understood the real object of this scheme. The Alliance had to leave their rooms in St. Martin's Lane, near Charing Cross, owing to the building in which they were located being taken over by a Government bank in connection with the war. The Alliance has found a temporary shelter in Queen Square, but this will have to be given up in less than two years' time, and then new accommodation will be imperatively needed.

It is up to the friends of the Alliance to provide this shelter. A sum of £3,500 has already been subscribed. Surely with a little effort this could be increased to £5,000 before the end of the year. I sent £10 to you some weeks ago, and I am grateful to Lord and Lady Molesworth and others who were induced to contribute a similar sum. I now enclose a cheque for £5 in the hope that at least nine other subscribers will come forward and make the sum £50. We must be prepared to deny ourselves in some direction if we are to see this cause prosper. I am convinced that, if those of us who can give our £5 or £10 will do our part, some more wealthy subscribers will be responsible for the larger sums. It would be extremely gratifying if by Christmas Day we could reach the halfway house and have £5,000 at our credit for this object.

It is essential that the new offices should be in a central position. People reach London from all parts of the world, and there ought to be some central agency where enquirers into psychic subjects can find direction. The London Spiritualist Alliance can give this direction. I have been gratified to learn that the number of members joining the Alliance has greatly increased in recent months. May this increase of membership continue.

Then, as to *LIGHT*. We cannot do without *LIGHT*. To lonely workers like myself it is invaluable. It is the connecting link with readers and workers all over the world. *LIGHT* must be adequately maintained and made a paying proposition. Surely the unseen helpers will guide us and lend their aid if we will only do our part. I have seen a handful of Methodists in this city erect a building costing £40,000 in a central and commanding position. If a handful of Methodists could do that, shall not the readers of *LIGHT* seize this opportunity and provide a home for their newspaper—a home that will be the centre of future operations? The call is urgent. Let the response be generous and sincere.

We require not only a central agency in London, but in every prominent city in the kingdom. But I lay the emphasis on London, because London is the heart of the Empire. When suitable rooms have been provided there we can transfer our energies to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Belfast and other centres. In the meantime let us concentrate our energies on London.

If Spiritualism, according to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is the greatest cause before the public at the present time, then it is a privilege, besides being a duty, to support this cause and to give proof to the people of Great Britain that we are in earnest on the subject, that we will not only give our money, but, if need be, our lives, that these sacred principles may be vindicated and maintained.

I may add that I am a mere outsider, a mere spectator. I am one of the seekers after truth who have been aided by *LIGHT* and the Alliance, and it is to those who, like myself, are on the outer fringe of the movement, that this appeal is made.

STANLEY GORDON.

Edinburgh.
August 24th.

MR. HORACE LEAF will lecture on "Materialisations" at the Battersea Town Hall on the 10th instant, and at No. 3, Vere-street, on the 11th. Those who have not seen the wonderful series of pictures he throws on the screen should take advantage of these opportunities. Tickets can be obtained at this office.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is to lecture to-day (Saturday) at Southsea, and at Bournemouth, in the Winter Gardens, on Friday next, 12th inst.

Four materialising séances are described by Bernard Chappell in the current "International Psychic Gazette." They were held in connection with the Rotherham Spiritual Evidence Society, Mr. Chambers, of Morpeth, being the medium. The first séance was held on July 1st last, when nine forms, six adults and three children, came from the cabinet. At the second, on July 2nd, fourteen forms manifested, several of which were recognized. One was the grandmother of a sitter, and she came walking with a stick as in life on earth. The other two séances were equally successful. In one instance a form was distinctly seen to build up outside the cabinet. As materialising phenomena are rare nowadays this record is highly interesting.

The passing is announced of Dr. Chas. W. MacCarthy, of Sydney, New South Wales, an ardent Spiritualist who befriended many mediums. He was prominent in connection with the materialising séances of Mrs. Annie Mellon in Australia, and was present at many of the sittings given by the medium Charles Bailey, an account of which Dr. MacCarthy published.

Mrs. Harper, the mother of Edith K. Harper (author of "Stead the Man") tells, in the "Harbinger of Light," how our unseen friends hear us when we read aloud. On one occasion a communicator asked her to read to him "Little Log," a book of ethical teaching which he liked exceedingly, adding "I want a poor soul to hear." Mrs. Harper remarks "It is very interesting to feel that one may help in such a simple and easy way those who have gone over the Border in a state of uncertainty in regard to life's possibilities, in the freer circumstances of its new condition."

Mr. E. F. Benson will doubtless be surprised to find his latest novel, "Across the Stream," advertised in an American Spiritualist paper as "A singularly penetrating and beautiful analysis of psychic influences from first baby impressions through youth and manhood. A vivid, glowing story that recalls Sir Oliver Lodge's treatment of the theme in 'Raymond.'"

Our congratulations to the Rev. Walter Wynn on the publication of his new book, "The Bible and the After-Life," which we notice elsewhere in this issue. The whole question of phenomena and Biblical records is fearlessly faced by one who is recognised as a profound student of the Bible. We note Mr. Wynn's remarks in the Preface that of the letters he received concerning "Rupert Lives!" the "most bitter, narrow and bigoted" came from members of Christian Churches.

All who are interested in the welfare of the Alliance and who know our need for a New Centre, will, we hope, give us any information they may have regarding suitable premises. Such premises must be central, they must be in a quiet neighbourhood, and they must afford accommodation for large meetings, as well as space for the library and for offices of *LIGHT*.

A large parcel of books on Spiritualism was dispatched to Korea last week from this office in response to an order received.

The programme for the coming session of the Alliance, to begin on October 2nd, is now in the printer's hands and will be delivered to members very shortly. Next winter promises to be a time of great activity, and large additions to the Alliance's membership are confidently expected.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle forwards us a cheque for £100 from "A Friend in France," who wishes to remain anonymous, the sum to be devoted to any particular work of the Alliance that Sir Arthur may think desirable.

He who is too busy doing good finds no time to be good.—SIR RAMENDRANATH TAGORE.

Most of us were brought up to believe that the soul had power to soar on the wings of imagination, but no more than this. Few of us were taught that the soul is a replica of the body and has eyes and ears as has the physical. Few of us were really given to understand that "there is (now) a spiritual body" encased within the tabernacle of the flesh, and that it is as necessary to develop the faculties of this spiritual body as it is to develop the faculties of the physical body.—"Angels Seen To-day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT and IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

FALLACIES OF REINCARNATION.

"King's Counsel," author of "So Saith the Spirit," writes:—

Mrs. de Crespigny's articles are always a pleasure to read, and her observations in *LIGHT* of the 23rd of August will be of interest even to those who have no faith in the theory of reincarnation. I would venture, however, to offer a few criticisms on her contentions.

So convinced is she of the truth of this theory that, in her view, "it is patent to the least thoughtful" that reincarnation offers "the only rational explanation of the inequalities and injustices in this world." But in spite of these decided views, the article concludes with an admission that in support of the theory "no concrete proofs" (the word "concrete" might have been omitted) "can at present be urged." It would be more correct to say that no evidence of any description can be produced. Mrs. de Crespigny, however, consoles reincarnationists for the absence of evidence by saying, "but it is a hypothesis that assuredly answers many vexed questions of logic and justice." In other words, the theory satisfies the ideas of reincarnationists as to the fitness of things, and upon that ground, with or without evidence, ought to be accepted.

The assumption that reincarnation is necessary in order to prevent injustice overlooks the fact that compensation can be made in the spirit world for inequality in the earth-life. Mrs. de Crespigny argues that if those who are harshly treated in the earth-life "are to inherit bliss in the next world, presumed to be eternal, as compensation for their woes in this, the injustice is obviously reversed, and those who do not suffer in this world are 'of all men the most miserable.'" But this argument is based upon the footing that because the life hereafter is eternal, any difference of treatment by way of compensation must also be eternal; a contention which is obviously fallacious, since the differentiation would be of such a nature and for such a period as to produce justice, and no more and no less than justice.

Moreover, the ground for any supposed reincarnation being the alleged necessity for making up in this way for injustices in the earth-life, it surely ought not to be forced upon those who, although unfortunate on earth, have no wish to be reincarnated even under different conditions. Numerous spirit messages show that when anyone, after leaving this life, has passed through the purgatorial period and reached a happy plane, the happiness enjoyed exceeds any that the most fortunate person enjoys on earth, and a desire to return to earth is never entertained. Accordingly, if a person, harshly treated in the earth life, is to be compulsorily reincarnated, this would but add to his misfortunes.

Mrs. de Crespigny refers to the unfairness of placing some individuals in positions favourable to the development of moral qualities "and others where they never have a chance," and contends that if we all go through the same disciplinary stages, "returning each time to circumstances earned by our own actions in previous earth-lives," the riddle is solved. If, however, a person who in the earth-life is in a position where he can "never have a chance"—say, the child of criminals and living in an atmosphere of crime and degradation—is to return to circumstances earned by his action in the previous earth-life, he would come back to earth a degraded criminal; so that such an unfortunate person would have an indefinite number of reincarnations in the same miserable conditions.

Further, if, on earth, all are to go through "the same disciplinary stages," the number of reincarnations must be as the sand for multitude; for no two persons are exactly alike in disposition, capacity, station, appearance, surroundings, and other circumstances making up their conditions. Moreover, the contention that we all pass through the same disciplinary stages appears to be inconsistent with the words which follow in the same sentence that "we return each time to circumstances earned by our own actions in previous earth-lives." If the new birth depends upon the actions in the preceding earth-life, our successive experiences (or "disciplinary stages") instead of being the same, would vary very greatly.

Reincarnation is not required by way of discipline, since, in the spirit world, all discipline that it necessary or desirable can be, and is in fact, experienced; and in apportioning punishment or reward for conduct on earth, due allowance is made for the favourable or unfavourable conditions under which the earth-life has been passed.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

A SUNBURNT DREAM.

AND THE STORY OF AN ASTRAL FLOGGING.

The daily Press adopts a breezy, jaunty spirit in dealing with psychic matters. Here is a sample, headings and all, taken from the London "Evening News" of August 29th:—

If you can't afford to go to the seaside for a holiday, you should cultivate your latent powers of repercussion.

Repercussion may not be so satisfying. But it's much cheaper. The September "Occult Review" quotes several cases to show exactly what it is.

In one of them:—

A person claimed that after dreaming that he had spent a week at the seaside *he woke up the next morning with a sunburnt complexion as the result of his imaginary vacation!*

Another instance is quoted by Mr. Brodie-Innes. This, a bad case of repercussion, concerned an Astral flogging:—

"A patient suffering from insomnia owing to a persistent drumming in his room ascribed the noise to an enemy who was deliberately annoying him by the use of occult powers."

"He was advised by a medium whenever the noise occurred to lash about vigorously with a dog-whip in the direction in which it was heard."

"The patient acted accordingly, and it was found immediately afterwards that the enemy he suspected was covered with long weals and scars, as though he had been severely beaten."

There are some more repercussion stories in the "Occult Review," but they are not so repercussive as these.

THINKING IN "WATERTIGHT COMPARTMENTS."

By E. W. DUXBURY.

Perhaps in relation to no other branch of research are such extraordinary methods of criticism displayed as those which prevail regarding the spiritistic theory. It may be useful to comment upon a few of them. First and foremost, there is a marked tendency on the part of any individual who has achieved distinction in science, literature, or theology, to regard himself as thereby qualified to make a kind of *ex cathedra* pronouncement concerning a subject about which it is clear, from his utterances, that his knowledge is very limited. It is difficult to conceive the occurrence of such a phenomenon with regard to any other branch of scientific research.

Then there is the type of critic who seems disposed to base the truth or error of the spiritistic theory on the results obtained from some particular medium, masked or otherwise, or on the value to be ascribed to some particular book, while tacitly ignoring all other evidence having a bearing upon the question. This is much as though the value of a special method of treatment in clinical medicine, which had in general proved beneficial, were treated as dependent on the death or recovery thereunder of a particular patient to whom it had been applied.

There is, further, the kind of critic who makes the question a purely personal one. He has attended a certain number of séances, and has obtained only inconclusive, or even comical, results. He then regards the spiritistic theory as untenable, thus discounting altogether the results attested by other investigators more successful, and perhaps more competent, than himself. We can well conceive the slow and painful progress which would be made in any branch of science, such as zoology or ethnology, if the investigator were influenced solely by his own researches, and paid no heed to the data and results reported by his scientific confrères. Such labours *in vacuo* would not facilitate the discovery of truth.

There is, moreover, a class of critic who may not inaptly be described as thinking in "water-tight compartments." They isolate a limited variety of phenomena, of which they conceive that an extension *ad libitum* of the telepathic theory might provide the explanation, and then treat the spiritistic theory as being out of court. Every other class of phenomena, having a bearing on the latter theory, is ignored as though it were non-existent, and a conclusion is thus arrived at, after examining a portion only of the evidence involved.

Telepathy, it may be mentioned incidentally, is frequently cited by those who have evidently a very imperfect knowledge of this power. Just as the popular novelist and dramatist often endow hypnotism with possibilities which are quite unknown to the standard authorities on the subject, so telepathy is often accredited with powers which transcend all known human experience. It is scarcely scientific to combat an unwelcome theory by an alternative theory which, as stated, is only a concept of the imagination.

Generally, it may be justifiably asserted that every criticism of the spiritistic theory which is not based upon a synthetic review of the whole of the evidence by which that theory is supported, and a consideration of every class of phenomena involved (and not merely a limited section thereof) must be regarded as intellectually worthless.

Mr. PERCY STREET is to give a course of 12 lectures on "Healing" in connection with the Walthamstow society.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE UNSEEN.

By W. COPELAND TRIMBLE, J.P.

Mr. E. F. Benson has on different occasions laid it down that what is called Spiritualism or Spiritism discloses no information to a sitter with a medium that he did not know before, and he accounts for certain disclosures as the emanations of the subconscious mind. If this statement were true he would have made a strong case. I have been a sceptic, and a bitter one, but what has impressed me is the revelation to me of that of which I most certainly had not thought (it could not have been derived by telepathy) and of which, indeed, I had no knowledge.

We are all, I take it, interested in the truth. We are not so much concerned with "isms" or societies as getting the truth, and from the truth we can then form conclusions. It is, then, in the spirit of getting at the truth I write these lines, having no time for ordinary discussions or controversies.

During my first interview with a medium, Mrs. B., I was not quite satisfied with the theory of the spirits of the departed, but all that was told to me was correct; and I was staggered by this fact—that what purported to be the spirit of a beloved one told me that a child of mine possessed the power of communicating with her if she would use it: a statement which I discovered, to my amazement, was correct. Another point which shook my unbelief was that the medium told me, on my rising to leave, that a certain man whom she described was standing by me, and the description, even to the shoulder on which he wore his Highland plaid, was correct. On a subsequent occasion I received a message from what purported to be his spirit which only he could by any possibility have conveyed, relating to himself and myself, but which I could not possibly have conceived.

I lay no stress on the accurate descriptions of the passing away of my dear ones. The subconscious mind might possibly be interpreted by the sensitive. So sensitive are some of these mediums that one lady, when she entered the room in which I sat, told me she could do little for me that day. "Why?" I inquired. "Because," she replied, "you are too fatigued; you are utterly exhausted." And she was ten or twelve feet away.

"How do you know," I asked her.

"I feel it," she said. "You are fatigued."

"I am so tired," I answered, "that I lay down for half an hour before I came to you to try to overcome the fatigue." It was all true.

But while I place no stress on the descriptions of the passing away of some relatives I do lay stress on the evidence given me by what purported to be the spirit of a dear boy whom I had lost in action and of the circumstances of whose death I knew nothing at the time of the sitting. He told of his rushing down the trench bareheaded to warn his men, of his falling a victim to the gas which he had perceived and was warning his men to protect themselves against, of how he fell, and of his body becoming black—all of which was verified some time after by soldiers from that very trench who told me all that occurred on that fatal 29th of April, 1916. I was impressed, too, by his telling me of his visits to his brother in another war area, and by that brother writing home about his consciousness of his brother's presence in his dug-out; and of my boy's relating to me what I had done for his University career and my disappointment at his not being able to fulfil all that I had hoped from his brilliant promise.

Perhaps such evidence may be negated by a severe critic, but I know what evidence is and what cross examination is. What, however, can explain what I now have to relate? In one case a departed friend told me where a particular letter of mine to her was placed, and it was found as described, and other things which I did not know. What can explain communications of a most intimate kind not known to me, some so sacred that I cannot disclose them?

I have had a sketch made for me of a person who purported to commune with me, and I recognised the sketch. I have inquired how many children I had in the world beyond. I thought of two, but was told of three, and of how the third had passed away and the circumstances attending the passing. I have had matters revealed of which I had no knowledge whatever—and these things cannot possibly be disclosed by telepathy or be evolved from the subconscious mind.

I have known from a few intimate friends that at certain times they are aware of the presence and proximity of their dear ones, and of this reality there can be no element of doubt.

Call it all what you will—explain it as you may try—there is no doubt whatever of the reality of psychic phenomena; of their being supernatural and inexplicable by ordinary means. What purports to be spirit communication offers the most probable solution of the problem.

SPIRITUAL SPECTRO-ANALYSIS.—So does a whole world, with all its greatnesses and littlenesses, lie in a twinkling star. And as mere human knowledge can split a ray of light and analyse the manner of its composition, so sublimer intelligences may read in the feeble shining of this earth of ours, every thought and act, every vice and virtue, of every responsible creature in it.—DICKENS.

EVER-PRESENT COMPANIONSHIP.

By H. A. DALLAS.

In the course of my reading I came upon a paragraph in Professor Ramsey's "Pauline Studies" which is of special interest to Spiritualists. After pointing out that the distribution of second and third century inscriptions in Asia Minor supports the account given to us in Acts of the importance of the work of St. Paul in spreading the Christian faith in the Provinces of the Empire, he says:—

"We possess only one document long enough to show anything of the spirit of these early Christian Churches, the epitaph which a second century presbyter or bishop wrote 'to be an imperishable record of his testimony and message which he had to deliver to mankind'; and it mentions (besides the main truths of his religion) the ever-present companionship and guidance of St. Paul. It has survived to bear witness that the Churches of Central Asia Minor continued to look to Paul as their pattern and their guide more than a century after his death" (pp. 257, 258).

"Ever present companionship"; that is what the early Christians realised, and it is only the degeneracy which so often supersedes the dawn of a great movement which has robbed later Christians of the realisation of the continuous communion between those on earth and those who pass out of sight.

OCCULT CHEMISTRY.*

It is a great pity that one cannot praise this record of what must have been a huge amount of honest work. The passing of adverse criticisms is at all times a thankless task and it becomes doubly distasteful when, as at present, the work criticised is a well-meant endeavour to increase the sum total of human knowledge.

Mr. Sinnett in editing a new edition of "Occult Chemistry" by Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, seems to have realised that something more than a mere enumeration of results is necessary to form a scientific treatise. A preliminary chapter has therefore been added to enable the reader "to realise the credibility of the results attained." Hopes might therefore be formed that at last we were to be told exactly how the experiments were carried out, what samples were used and their purity, what check experiments were made on bodies not ultramicroscopic and therefore of verifiable form, what precautions were taken to avoid suggestion—in fact, the many really relevant details which would be of interest to any careful student. Alas for the vanity of human hopes, all these points are left still enshrouded in impenetrable mystery.

As regards the remainder of the book, there is no change in the contents as compared with the previous edition, speaking from memory. The atomic weight numbers have not been changed or brought into line with the modern system of taking $O = 16$. In this connection some confusion of thought seems to be indicated on p. 105. It is implied that the occult numbers being higher on the average than the orthodox values taking $H = 1$, therefore taking $O = 16$ would lessen the average error. This is not so. Atomic weights are, of course, purely relative, and the mean error is not affected whatever element is taken as the standard of reference. The atomic weights of most of the commoner elements are known certainly within $\frac{1}{1,000}$ of their true value. The occult weights show disagreement amounting, in some cases, to $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

No attempt has been made in the present edition to deduce any possibility of dynamic stability in weird forms assigned to the atom structures. In fact, there is no indication of dynamic structure whatever.

One could continue indefinitely, however, in pointing out these rather obvious defects in the occult system, but a good many have already been indicated in the discussion on this subject which appeared in *LIGHT* at the beginning of this year. It does not seem worth while to cover the same ground again, as the subject is naturally technical and specialised.

In conclusion it may be said that it is to be regretted that Theosophists in general have a habit of writing as if for initiates only. Should the time come when they will model their work on a scientific plan—and a better model could not be found than Dr. Crawford's recent works, just to mention one example of how an obscure subject should be attacked!—then and then only may they expect their work to be considered a true contribution to Science. A book that contains not a single useful figure and is written with an utter disregard of scientific method must ever remain obscure.

ERNEST C. CRAVEN.

THERE is no death in the world but forgetfulness. Everything that loves and has loved to death meets again.—MAZZINI.

* "Occult Chemistry: Clairvoyant Observations on the Chemical Elements," by ANNIE BESANT, P.T.S., and CHARLES W. LEADBEATER. Revised edition (Theosophical Publishing House, 8/6).

THOMAS VAUGHAN, MYSTIC.*

Thomas Vaughan, in the opinion of Mr. A. E. Waite—and no reader could desire a better authority—is the most interesting figure in Hermetic Literature of the seventeenth century in England. He comes before us in his works as an occult and mystical writer. "A finger-post which, ever pointing forward, shows the way to others," indicating the true path, the right infallible way "to discover mysteries and communicate Heaven to Earth." Those who make their first acquaintance with Hermetic philosophy through the handsome volume just issued by the Theosophical Publishing House are most fortunate in doing so with Mr. Waite at their elbow. The biographical preface and ample annotations are of the greatest value and interest, and the introduction interpreting Vaughan's mystical doctrine, his views and hypotheses on the First Matter and Regeneration, is one of the finest chapters ever contributed towards the understanding of spiritual Alchemy. It is not too much to say that the writings of Thomas Vaughan without such an interpreter are often difficult and at times almost wearisome, but there are many pages in which the enthusiasm of the inspired philosopher carries the reader to exalted regions of pure devotion far from the world of sense and physical manifestation. Thus, in the work "Anthroposophia Theomagica, a Discourse of the Nature of Man and his State after Death," we read of "a moist, silent fire," which "passeth through all things in the world, and it is Nature's chariot. This is the mask and screen of the Almighty: wheresoever He is, this train of fire attends Him. . . . This fire is the vestment of the Divine Majesty. . . . His naked royal essence none can see and live. The glory of His presence would swallow up the natural man and make him altogether spiritual." Thus the glorified face of Moses shows after conference with Him, "and from this small tincture we may guess at our future estate in the regeneration."

From a literary standpoint Vaughan's "Lumen de Lumine, or A New Magical Light," is certainly the most excellent of all his writings, and in particular the "Letter from the Brothers of R. C. concerning the Invisible Magical Mountain and the Treasure therein contained," whether written or reproduced by the author, is equal to any passage from the works of the greatest adepts of Alchemy, or the most renowned of the mystical philosophers. Besides the works mentioned, the volume includes "Anima Magica Abscondita: A Discourse of The Universal Spirit in Nature"; "Magica Adamica: The Antiquity of Magic"; "Coelum Terrae: The Magician's Heavenly Chaos, unfolding a Doctrine concerning the Terrestrial Heaven"; "Aula Lucis: The House of Light"; "The Fraternity of the Rosy Cross and A Short Declaration of Their Physical Work"; "Euphrates: The Waters of the East"; and Appendices containing a Notebook of Thomas Vaughan (of exceptional personal interest), his Latin Poems, a brief account of his controversy with Henry More, the Platonist, and a Bibliography.

An index completes this most welcome and beautiful volume, which should be possessed by all who look for "a fount of inexhaustible riches to those thirsting after truth and justice," who would be "transmuted from dead stones into living philosophical stones." In these days of manifold communications from those who have passed through the gate of physical death the admonition of Thomas Vaughan is almost startling. "Wise is he who keeps silent in the sight of Heaven."

P. S. WELBY.

TELEPATHY FROM THE LIVING.

Mr. W. Boyd Shannon writes:—

I noticed in a recent number a query as to whether telepathic communication could be made with a living person by the means usually employed with discarnate beings. It can be done, with those who are asleep. But it is necessary to have someone on the other side who can and will call them. It then becomes a dream-experience to them. Some might remember it, but no doubt, like the majority of dreams, little, if any, recollection would remain on waking.

Dreams often consist of these incidents, and travels in connection with them. The principal difficulty is getting into touch with a personality sufficiently advanced on the other side to have the requisite knowledge. Distance, as we know it, does not exist in this instance. There is little doubt that the inexplicable manner in which news travels in the East is the result of the use of this process.

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the crowded heaven, and I said to my spirit, When we become the enfolders of those orbs and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be fill'd and satisfied then? And my spirit said, No, we but level that lift, to pass and continue beyond. —WALT WHITMAN.

* "The Works of Thomas Vaughan: Eugenius Philalethes." Edited, Annotated and Introduced by ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE, Theosophical Publishing House, 21/- net.

OIL SHOWERS AT A RECTORY.

STRANGE EXPERIENCES IN NORFOLK.

A clergyman and his wife and family at Swanton Novers, a little village in Norfolk, have been compelled to leave the Rectory and seek a temporary home elsewhere, owing to showers of oil pouring from the ceilings. A possible psychic explanation is suggested from the statement that the phenomena are closely connected with the presence of a young servant girl.

The following account is supplied by the Special Correspondent of "The Times," who wrote on Monday, September 1st:—

From the rector, the Rev. Hugh Guy, I have obtained a full account of the phenomena so far as they have been recorded. On August 8th, when there was a big explosion in France, earth tremors were felt at the village of Swanton Novers, and early in the afternoon five greasy blotches appeared on the scullery wall of the house. At the same time, an odour of sandalwood oil was noticed to be hanging about the garden. Although these manifestations aroused comment, no special signification was attached to them, and the following day the family left the village for a fortnight's holiday. If anything occurred during the period when the house was closed it was not of a startling kind, but on August 23rd, when the rector returned home, water with a faint trace of paraffin began to drip from the scullery ceiling. This was regarded as a matter for the local plumber, who was duly called in, but failed to discover the leaking pipe. On the following day water fell from the ceiling of the maid's bedroom. The girl was transferred to a bed placed in the bathroom, but immediately she got there a fresh shower of oil and water occurred.

FLOODED OUT.

The situation rapidly became worse during last week. First the dining room, then the drawing room and bedrooms were affected. Visitors who had come to stay with the rector had to leave. Mr. Guy's two young nieces were driven from their rooms by another shower of oil on their beds. On Wednesday oil and water spoiled the breakfast table cloth. "In the scullery," the rector told me, "we were practically flooded out. The stuff came from the ceiling in gallons. We made a hole through the floor above it, to discover the source of the downpour, to find even the laths to be dry. More extraordinary than anything else is the fact that since this hole was made not a drop of water or paraffin has fallen through it, but there have been drippings from other parts of the ceiling. The further end of the week the house had become uninhabitable. Much of the oil we find is highly inflammable."

About five this afternoon, while Mr. Guy was showing me over the almost empty rectory, a furniture remover let us know that a fresh shower had taken place in the kitchen. I went to look at what was happening, and saw that the floor was splashed with water, and that a fresh discoloured patch about 18 in. long had appeared on the ceiling. From this spot half a dozen oily globules were suspended, and occasionally one of these fell. There was a strong smell of paraffin about the room, but that was general throughout the house. The "manifestation" could have been caused by some person throwing up a cupful of oil and paraffin, but who would do this?

DAYTIME APPEARANCES.

One matter which requires clearing up is that the appearances of the oil are limited to the daytime, and are almost exclusively confined to rooms where a little 15-year-old girl servant chances to be. "The maid seems to act like a water diviner," the rector said. I noticed the girl to-day, and should not suspect her of any inclination towards practical joking.

The distribution of the various liquids which have been collected in the house was given to me as follows:—

Dining room—paraffin and petrol.
Drawing room—some paraffin.
Kitchen—petrol, paraffin, water.
Scullery—sandalwood oil, petrol, methylated spirits, paraffin, water.
Bedrooms—water and paraffin.
Bathroom—water and paraffin.
Hall—petrol, paraffin, water.
Well—paraffin.

There was another shower of the oil which is regarded as sandalwood this morning. This is only the second time this oil has been seen.

NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.—The Honorary Financial Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks.), gratefully acknowledges the following contributions received in July: Daulby Hall, Liverpool, £2 1s. 5d.; Retiring Collection, Nottingham, £7 2s. 6d.; Mr. and Mrs. Masters, £1 1s.; Mr. and Mrs. Swindon, 10s.; Auric Lecture, 5s.; Mr. and Mrs. Lowe, £1; Barrow Psycho Quarterly Subscription, £1 6s.; Coventry Progressive, £1; Mrs. Crookshaw, 5s. Total, £14 10s. 11d. Disbursements during the month amounted to £17 12s. 6d.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.—6.30, Mrs. M. H. Wallis. September 14th, Mrs. Mary Inkpen.
The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, W.2.—11, Mr. H. G. Beard; 6.30, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. Wednesday, September 10th, 7.30, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.
Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.—11, Mrs. E. M. Ball; 6.30, Mr. Ernest Meads.
Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.—7, Mr. Jones, address and clairvoyance.
Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, Mr. Symons. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Brown.
Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall, Thames-street.—6.30, Mrs. Alice Harper, address and clairvoyance.
Croydon.—117b, High-street.—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mr. Geo. Taylor Gwinn.
Reading.—16, Blagrove-street.—11.30 and 6.45, Mr. P. R. Street.
Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mrs. J. Rolleston.
Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.—6.30, Mr. Ernest Hunt. Wednesday, 7.30, Mrs. Clara Irwin.
Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mr. H. Boddington. Thursday, 8.15, lecture by Miss Ellen Conroy, M.A.
Brighton.—Athenaeum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mrs. J. Walker, addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mrs. Walker.
Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. Wright. September 11th, 8.15, clairvoyance. 12th, 8.15, study class.
Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.—7, Mr. B. Wilkins, address. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Orłowski, address and clairvoyance.
Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—Sunday next, Lyceum, anniversary, special services and music, speaker, M. J. J. Goodwin; 11.30, the Lyceum, "What It Is," 7 p.m., "Some of Its Colours and Their Memory;" 3 p.m., special Lyceum session; collection for the Lyceum at all meetings. Monday, 7.15, psychic readings, Mrs. Orłowski. Inquirers' meetings, Tuesday, 3 p.m., and Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance; all welcome.

NEW ILFORD SOCIETY.—The new Spiritualist society at Ilford was firmly established by the propaganda meeting held on Friday, August 29th. After some remarks by the Chairman, Mr. A. T. Connor, Mr. Richard Boddington gave an address on spiritual truths, which was listened to with keen attention. Mrs. Neville gave well-recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Twenty members were enrolled. The meeting place proved too small to accommodate all the inquirers.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road		7-0
Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill	11-0	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway		7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earham Hall, Earham Grove		7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amhurst Road		7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone		6-30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street		6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street		6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road		6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembridge Place, Bayswater, W.	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.		6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Braemar Road		6-30
*Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road		7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms		7-0
*Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane		7-0
*Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 684, High Road		7-0
*Upper Holloway, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway		6-30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with, it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

STANDARD BOOKS SUPPLIED TO ORDER FOR CASH ONLY.

Post free from the Office of "LIGHT," 6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C. 1, at the prices quoted. Remittances must accompany orders, otherwise they cannot be sent.

Spirit Teachings. Through the Mediumship of Wm. Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon.). By Automatic or Passive Writing. With a Biography by Charlton T. Speer and two full-page portraits; eighth edition. Cloth, 324 pages, 6s. 6d.

On the Threshold of the Unseen. An Examination of the Phenomena of Spiritualism and of the Evidence for Survival after Death. By Sir William Barrett, F.R.S. Cloth, 336 pages, 8s.

Man is a Spirit. A Collection of spontaneous cases of Dream, Vision and Ecstasy. By J. Arthur Hill. Cloth, 199 pages, 5s. 5d.

Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine. By J. Arthur Hill. Introduction by Sir A. Conan Doyle. Cloth, 270 pages, 8s.

The Harmonial Philosophy. A Compendium and Digest of the Works of Andrew Jackson Davis, the American Seer. Cloth, 424 pages, 11s.

The Religion of To-Morrow. By W. J. Colville. Cloth, 320 pages, 4s. 11d.

Human Magnetism; or, How to Hypnotise. A Practical Handbook for Students of Mesmerism. By Professor James Coates. With Ten Plates, showing induction of phenomena, Experimental and Curative. Third Edition. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Seeing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Psychometry, Thought Transference, Telepathy, and Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

Photographing the Invisible. Practical Studies in Spirit Photography, Spirit Portraiture and other Rare, but Allied Phenomena. By James Coates, Ph.D., F.A.S. With 90 photographs. Cloth, 6s. 6d.

The Gift of the Spirit. Essays by Prentice Mulford. Edited by A. E. Waite. 4s. 11d.

Reminiscences. By Alfred Smedley. Including an account of Marvellous Spirit Manifestations. 1s. 3d.

The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen. By Mrs. Oliphant. Cloth, 2s. 3d.

After Death. New Enlarged Edition of Letters from Julia. Given through W. T. Stead. Cloth, 3s. 11d.

Practical Psychometry: Its Value and How it is Mastered. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

Practical Yoga. A Series of Thoroughly Practical Lessons upon the Philosophy and Practice of Yoga with a chapter devoted to Persian Magic. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

Practical Hypnotism. Teaching eighteen different methods of inducing Mesmerism or Hypnotism. By O Hashnu Hara. 1s. 8d.

The Voices. A Sequel to Glimpses of the Next State. Accounts of Sittings for the Direct Voice in 1912-13. By Vice-Admiral W. Osborne Moore. Cloth, 461 pages, 4s.

Speaking Across the Border Line. Letters from a Husband in Spirit Life to His Wife on Earth. Paper covers, 2s. 3d. Art Linen Binding, 3s. 4d.

Not Silent, if Dead. By H. (Haweis). Through the Mediumship of Parma. Cloth, 3s. 11d.

The Human Aura and the Significance of Colour. By W. J. Colville. 1s. 7½d.

Claude's Book. Edited by L. Kelway-Bamber. With letter from Sir Oliver Lodge. Cloth, 149 pages, 6s. 4d.

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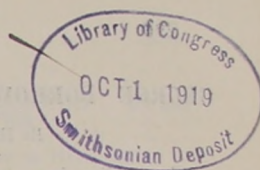
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No. 2,018. VOL. XXXIX. [Registered as] SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1919. [a Newspaper.] PRICE TWOPENCE.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Most of us, as railway travellers, are familiar with a little ceremony which takes place on a long journey at some station at which the train halts. A man walks along the side of the train "tapping the wheels" to see that they are sound. Now and again, perhaps to the surprise of some of our readers, we admit to these columns, questions, objections, or, it may even be, reasoned articles challenging the Spiritualistic position in some of its essentials. This is our method of "tapping the wheels" to see that our train is in no danger of an accident. Incidentally, of course, there are other good purposes to be served. We aspire that LIGHT shall be utterly fearless, shirking no criticism, burking no "disagreeable fact," but always sure of its ground. To occupy such a position as this means that we must be continually on the alert, so that it is as well that we shall thus be put on our mettle from time to time. So far, however, we have never been troubled with criticisms or challenges that struck us as really formidable. Mostly the objections, when they were worth considering at all, came from persons who had studied some part of the subject, and were either ignorant or neglectful of other sections. Their imperfect knowledge caused them to blunder. One conclusion we rarely fail to draw from the discussions that arise on these occasions is that the man who only knows the facts is usually a safer guide than the man who, however superior intellectually, is better acquainted with the theories. Many an unlettered Spiritualist has observed his facts with a care and accuracy that would make his learned critics blush—if they only knew! There is a wide difference between knowing a thing and only knowing about it.

* * *

For years we have had to reject and condemn much matter put forward as spirit communications on the ground that, aside from the question of its genuineness, it was wordy and more or less meaningless. A perfectly sensible idea, perhaps, had got itself clothed in clumsy and inappropriate words. We observe, in a recent issue of the "Illustrated London News," that Mr. G. K. Chesterton rather cruelly gibbets a case of this kind. He selects for analysis some spirit messages quoted in Mr. Basil King's article, "The Abolishing of Death" in "Nash's Magazine," where the spirit is reported as saying:—

You make death an impenetrable fog, while it is a mere golden mist, torn easily aside by the shafts of faith, and revealing life as not only continuous but as not cut in two by a great change. I cannot express myself as I wish. . . . It is more like leaving prison for freedom and happiness. Not that your present life lacks joy; it is all joy, but you have to fight with imperfections. Here we have to struggle only with lack of development. There is no evil—only different degrees of spirit.

G.K.C. takes also the following statement by Mr. King's spirit communicator, when asked about sin and its effect on the sinners who pass over:—

They come over with the evil, as it were, cut out, and leaving blanks in their souls. These have by degrees to be filled with good.

* * *

Concerning the above passages, Mr. Chesterton expresses himself in caustic terms. He says:—

I will waive the point whether death is a mist, or a fog, or a front door, or a fire-escape, or any other physical metaphor; being satisfied with the fact that it is there, and not to be removed by metaphors. But what amuses me about the spirit is that for him it is both there and not there. Death is non-existent in one sentence, and of the most startling importance six sentences afterwards. The spirit is positive that our existence is *not* cut in two by a great change at the moment of death. But the spirit is equally positive, a little lower down, that the whole of our human evil is instantly and utterly cut out of us, and all at the moment of death.

There is much more of this bright and satiric criticism, and, as far as it goes, it is legitimate—but it goes very little beyond externals and literary values, and these are not everything. Some of us can see clearly what the spirit is trying to say in this case. We cheerfully admit that, with certain exceptions, we should not care to print a spirit communication as a literary contribution, without careful revision. Yet some of us who are fastidious critics of language may perchance learn a salutary lesson when from the other side of the way we try to convey to our friends here some hints of almost incommunicable experiences in the clear and incisive words we used so fluently while in the flesh—and fail miserably. "I cannot express myself as I wish," wrote the spirit at whose message G.K.C. is so much amused. We remember F.W.H. Myers' plaint that for him communication with the earth was like dictating from behind a partition to an amanuensis who was partly blind, partly deaf and very stupid. We have to take some account of the difficulties. A critic can be very smart when he knows a little of the subject of spirit communication. When he knows a great deal, the smartness somehow evaporates. He becomes understanding and sympathetic. In some matters the heart may be more important than the head.

DECEASE OF DR. MERCIER.

The death of Dr. Mercier, which took place at Bournemouth on the 2nd inst., from pleurisy, leaves a notable gap in the ranks of medical science. He was an able psychiatrist and a man of versatile gifts as a writer and speaker. The "Times" we note, gives a full account of his career, with special reference to his brilliant work as an alienist, and we fully recognise that he served his day and generation well in all those departments of thought which his natural genius and great learning enabled him to follow. Needless to say, these did not include the arena of psychical research. His disquisitions on this subject, although marked by humour and pungency, revealed notable defects of knowledge and sympathy. In fact they often struck us as the very coxcombry of criticism. As the "Times" remarks, logic was not always his strong point, and "in his miscellaneous writings, outside his own special subjects, there were occasional faults of reasoning." However, it would be ungracious to pursue that aspect of his work. We may leave it with the classical reflection that no man is wise at all hours, and that in a relatively short life he did a vast amount of valuable work and made his mark as an authority on his own special subjects. We salute the passing of a valiant opponent.

That which ends in exhaustion is death, but the perfect ending is the endless.—TAGORE.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

By HORACE LEAF.

When reading the works of George Borrow, it is difficult not to feel that he was deeply "sensitive" in the particular sense in which that term is used in connection with psychical research.

The many references in his books to occult powers, and the incidents that he relates, show an awareness and an appreciation of the "hidden side" of things, attributable only to a natural sympathy lying deep within his own nature. It is as rational to suppose that a person of psychic temperament will respond to psychic facts, as that an artist will respond to art. And as in the latter case it happens irrespective of any special training, but by virtue of the inherent disposition of the artist, so it may be with the psychic. The effect is usually apparent when the person is brought into contact with the thing he is pre-disposed towards. This was the case with "good George Borrow."

There is, perhaps, one important difference between the attitude of a natural psychic and a natural artist. Whereas the artist readily admits his love of art, the psychic may deny his love of the occult. Nor need he, in doing this, be false to himself. He may actually believe he despises the thing that most strongly appeals to him. He may even demonstrate his sincerity by making it an "Aunt Sally" at which to hurl his jests and ridicule. The cause of the contradiction is to be found in public opinion. It may be popular to be artistic, but otherwise to be psychic. This was certainly the state of affairs during the first half of the eighteenth century, the period in which George Borrow published his engrossing experiences. Hence the reason why he frequently declared his disbelief in psychic forces.

But an innate quality will manifest itself, especially when it is one of the dominating characteristics of a personality so pronounced as Borrow's. Consequently, often when he has denied elsewhere the possibility of such strange events as "sorcery" and "second sight," he unconsciously registers his conviction that such mysterious forces and faculties exist, enabling some people to influence in strange ways their own destiny and the destiny of others, or to advance into futurity and describe what shall yet issue from its womb.

With George Borrow this paradoxical condition was bound to be unusually marked. He was so decisive in his views, so thorough in his nature, that he could hardly be doubtful on any point capable of clear expression. For the same reasons he could only be half convinced or wholly uncertain on that which was obscure. Therefore he was a most uncompromising Protestant, but a very doubtful occultist.

Here, then, lies the reason why he should, when writing of the Gypsies, among whom he had lived almost as a member of the order, and for whom he felt a genuine affection, declare their claims to sorcery to be preposterous, whilst, nevertheless, he records instances of their apparent ability to exercise it. In "The Zincali," we read of Chaléco Valdepena, the Gypsy soldier, who, being ignominiously disarmed by Borrow's Basque servant, said after a while, looking steadfastly into the servant's face: "My good fellow, I am a Gypsy and can read *baji* (fortune). Do you know where you will be this time to-morrow?" "Then, laughing like a hyena, he departed, and I never saw him again. On the morrow, at the time stated, Francisco was on his death-bed."

Events of this kind frequently perplexed Borrow, who had quite a number of them happen to him. Nor does he appear to have doubted them, even when their accuracy rested upon the testimony of others. Antonio, his remarkable Greek servant, to whom he was indebted for much assistance in his wanderings and distribution of the Bible in Spain, more than once proved his ability to foresee things. Thus, he foretold the sad fate of the strange Swiss, Benedict Moll, obsessed with the desire to unearth a hidden treasure.

"A strange man is this Benedict!" said Antonio to his master one morning; "a strange man, mon maitre, is this same Benedict. A strange life has he led, and a strange death he will die—it is written on his countenance."

Benedict Moll, as he once assured Borrow he would, sprang from the direst poverty to comparative riches and power, in the effort to appease his passion for the "hidden treasure." For a brief moment he became the cynosure of an important town in Spain; the next he was flung into a terrible prison, amidst the execration of thousands who would have gladly torn him limb from limb. Removed from that prison, "he disappeared on the road," to use the ominous words of Borrow's friend, who informed him of the old man's fate.

No wonder Borrow accepted the assertion of Antonio that he had in a dream been informed of Borrow's entry into Madrid. Regarding this, Borrow says:—

"A singular incident befell me immediately after my arrival. On entering the arch of the *posado*, called La Reyna, where I intended to put up, I found myself encircled in a person's arms, and, on turning round in amazement, beheld my Greek servant, Antonio. He was haggard and ill-dressed, and his eyes seemed starting from their sockets. As soon as we were alone he informed me that since my departure he had undergone great misery and destitution, having, during the whole period, been unable to find a master in need of his services, so that he was

brought nearly to the verge of desperation; but that on the night preceding my arrival he had a dream, in which he saw me, mounted on a black horse, ride up to the gate of the *posado*, and that on that account he had been waiting there during the greater part of the day. I do not pretend to offer an opinion concerning this narrative, which is beyond the reach of my philosophy, and shall content myself with observing that only two individuals in Madrid were aware of my arrival in Spain."

After the tragic departure for America of Isopel Berners from Mumpers Dingle, Borrow's lacerated affections were somewhat appeased by the assurance of his Gypsy friend, Mr. Pentulengro, that they two were never ordained for each other, because Borrow was destined to be a great traveller in another direction to that taken by Isopel. This prophecy was literally fulfilled.

Borrow's personal sensitiveness was frequently apparent. On one occasion he had a presentiment of the return of Isopel unexpectedly to the Dingle, and prepared everything for her comfort, although she arrived at a most unusual hour of the night. A still more impressive instance was when he was standing "on the castle hill," watching a fair of horses. There was no reason for him to expect to meet there anyone he knew, whilst his whole attention appears to have been riveted upon the interesting incidents taking place. He writes:—

Now all this time I had a kind of consciousness that I had been the object of some person's observation, that eyes were fastened on me from somewhere in the crowd. Sometimes I thought myself watched from before, sometimes from behind; and occasionally methought that, if I just turned my head to the right or left, I should meet a peering and inquiring glance; and indeed, once or twice, I did turn, expecting to see somebody whom I knew, yet always without success; though it appeared to me that I was but a moment too late, and that someone had just slipped away from the direction to which I turned, like the figure in a magic lantern. Once I was quite sure of a pair of eyes glaring over my right shoulder; my attention, however, was so fully occupied with objects which I have attempted to describe, that I thought very little of this coming and going, this flitting and dodging of I knew not whom or what.

About this time three Gypsies on horses rode through the crowd and gave an exhibition of their remarkable horsemanship; a fourth, starting forward from close beside Borrow, went up and whispered to the most notable of the riders as they were about to gallop away, evidently drawing his attention to Borrow. After they had ridden away the figure who had whispered to the rider, went towards Borrow with a cry of recognition. He was a Gypsy whom Borrow had met in a country lane under singular circumstances several years before, when both were mere boys. Borrow remarked how strange it was that the Gypsy should have known him, and that but for the peculiar nature of his greeting he would not have recognised him.

"Not so strange as you think, brother," said the Gypsy, "there is something in your face which would prevent people from forgetting you, even though you might wish it; and your face is not much altered since the time you wot of, though you have so much grown. I thought it was you, but to make sure I dodged about inspecting you. I believe you felt me, though I never touched you; a sign, brother, that we are akin, that we are *dui palor*, two relations. Your blood beat when mine was near, as mine does at the coming of a brother; we became brothers in that lane."

Owing, apparently, to the swarthy nature of Borrow's countenance, the Gypsies were in the habit of claiming him as one of themselves. It was obvious that Jasper Pentulengro—for this was the same gypsy who later told Borrow of his future travels—believed that he could trace Borrow's relationship to himself and his race in a much more subtle way.

(To be continued.)

PRAYER AND COMMUNION.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox continues with earnest persistence to keep before her readers the possibility of soul communion between the two spheres of being and to enforce it with the expression of her own firm assurance. In a poem on "Prayer" in the August "Nash's," she writes:—

Like incense from a censer, prayer must rise
Up from your heart and penetrate the skies;
But fervent love and unremitting prayer
Will build ascending pathways, stair on stair,
From earth to God's fair regions. And the door
Between you and your dead shall stand ajar
To close no more.
No more shall they seem distant and afar.

To be unable to have done with an experience, to be continually opening old wounds and wallowing in self-depreciation—these are the signs of decadence.—NIETZSCHE.

THE TRUE PLACE OF TELEPATHY.

A REPLY TO DR. HYSLOP.

Edyth Hinkley writes:—

May I be allowed a few lines to clear up what seems from a quotation in *LIGHT* (p. 273) to be a misunderstanding by Dr. Hyslop of an article of mine in the "Nineteenth Century" for May.

"It is evident," he says, that I have "no patience with Telepathy." That this is a mistake I think the following extract from the article in question will show:—

"The same psychic faculty which we now recognise beyond doubt to be the medium of most amazing telepathic feats between the living, may also, on the assumption of an actually existent spiritual universe, be the channel of communication between the discarnate and the incarnate; the Unconscious may, in short, be the organ of telepathic faculty between unseens of both orders, spirits in both worlds."

With regard to what follows in the quotation from Dr. Hyslop, surely, if as he says, "we know consciousness with the living as a cause," it is no far cry to consider *transference of consciousness*, or telepathy, also as a cause; neither, from one point of view, is a real cause, but a phenomenon; from another point of view both are causes.

I think the higher Spiritualism will not be advanced in the most permanent and satisfactory way until the difficulties raised in the article by "An Unconventional Sitter" (p. 280) are allowed their real weight, and it was largely to meet such a position that the article of last May was written. There are thousands of desolate hearts who would joyfully give all they possess, or ever could possess on earth, over and over again to be quite certain that the communications received through sensitives are in truth messages from the son or husband beyond the Veil and not the reading by the psychic of their own undying memories and unquenchable hopes. These people must not be confounded with ignorant, prejudiced or captious critics, for they are profoundly different from those. Many of them, who have been for years the most ardent and thorough students of the subject, can still do no more than "speak to each other softly of a hope."

I do not think that those who have seriously studied the strange intricacies of modern psychology—till recently an infant science—and the baffling and mysterious phenomena which meet us in the investigation of psychometry will deny that both of these greatly complicate the issue, and I am sure Dr. Hyslop will agree with me here. Hence my effort to show that "in human experience apparently identical phenomena are often found to have different and even contrasted causes." It certainly did not occur to me that I could be supposed to "have no patience with Telepathy."

REALITY OF SPIRIT CONTROL.

G. D. writes anent the article on this subject on p. 280:—

The conclusions of "An Unconventional Sitter" are clearly the result of a good deal of theory combined with very little practice. He should know that though utterances may sometimes be assumed to be of spirit origin which are really due to auto-suggestion, yet the reality of spirit control has been demonstrated over and over again in the presence of persons familiar with the phenomena of hypnotism. Therefore it is very necessary "to go outside the medium for an explanation of spirit control."

"An Unconventional Sitter" says it is difficult in the case of spirit control to determine what belongs to the ordinary or everyday mind, and what to the spirit mind or intelligence. Of course it is difficult. But it is not impossible, and those of us who have made a practical study of the matter have been able to determine the point many times. Why, our whole literature, including *LIGHT*, teems with cases in which the reality of spirit control has been determined beyond all peradventure. Where has "Unconventional Sitter" been living all the time? It is to be presumed, although it seems doubtful, that he knows sufficient of the subject of which he writes to be aware that the process of control from the spirit side is precisely that of hypnotism and suggestion. "Unconventional Sitter's" argument reminds one of the attempt of the very stupid sceptic to dispose of spirit communication by the theory of telepathy, the very process by which the communications are received. If someone inquires whether spirit control is not really hypnotism, our reply must be, "Yes, of course it is," adding, perhaps, the proverbial counter-question, "What about it?" Doubtless the fertile source of much of this perplexity and muddled reasoning arises from the average inquirer regarding spirits as (if existent at all) a different order of beings, instead of men and women, differing from us in little except that they are living without our outer integuments.

It is a mistake to argue with the people you love. Right or wrong, they annoy you equally.—SYBIL CAMPBELL LETHBRIDGE.

"PASSING THE 'FLUENCE' OVER A BOXER.

HOW CARPENTIER TRAINS ON HYPNOTISM.

We know that brute strength is not enough to make a champion pugilist. He must, in addition, possess that sense of ring-craft which is termed "science." Few, however, supposed that agencies strangely akin to the occult could be brought into play. Yet such seems to be the case if we are to take seriously the vivid story of his training methods, contributed to the August number of "Pearson's Magazine" by Georges Carpentier, the present champion boxer of Europe. It may well be that Carpentier himself does not realise how he is, apparently, employing, if not Nature's finer forces, at least some of her potent but less understood powers. Here is a significant statement:—

"The moment I agree to fight this or that man," he writes, "I endeavour as far as possible to take hold of my prospective opponent, and from the first day I enter into training I have him always in front of me."

Of course these words can bear quite a simple, ordinary meaning, but taken in conjunction with the rest of Carpentier's account they are capable of a deeper sense. It is worth noting, in this connection, that one of his closest friends, with whom he often spars, is the Belgian mystic, Maurice Maeterlinck.

Here epitomised, is Carpentier's very curious story:—

THE SOUL OF A BOXER.

"When I am training, I give myself up wholly and completely to Descamps, who is my manager. My independence, my very being I surrender; my soul is not my own."

"It is a fact, that when I get into the ring I feel no excitability, and so far as I remember no apprehension. May I tell you why?"

"The very first day I go into training, Descamps, who, in less prosperous days was, among other things, a dabbler in hypnotism, will come to me, and though he laughs his laugh of outrageous whimsicality, he is at the bottom intensely serious, and he will say,

"'Georges, *mon ami*, I take from you all save your fighting spirit, all but that I now cause to pass into me, the Professor Descamps of your childhood. I have all your cares, your troubles. I mesmerise you. So —"

"And with an uncanny wave of his arms, he 'passes the 'fluence' over me just as he did in the lean times of my childhood when he put me in a 'trance,' and I did thought-reading for the amusement and edification of countryside yokels at little cafés for a few sous in the hat."

"The house of François Descamps stands in its own grounds. On the lawn that skirts the side of it is my gymnasium, a structure made so that I am always in the open. Here I box and skip, and every afternoon with my manager as referee and timekeeper I conjure up before me the man I am to fight."

"And I fight him with all my might, and in every conceivable way."

Evidently Beckett, the English champion, will have to meet an opponent who fights with far more than his fists.

L. C.

DR. INGRAM ON THE AFTER-LIFE.

[A paragraph in our "Lighthouse" columns explains the publication of the following extract.]

The Bishop of London, preaching at St. Lawrence, Jewry, E.C., on January 28th, 1911, to the Commercial Travellers' Christian Association said:—

"There was no subject on which Christians were so much mistaken as on that of death. Death was mistaken for the pain which preceded it. Being born into another world was probably like being born into this. The supposed horror of death was founded on nothing more than a delusion. Death was an incident, which took place in a continuous life, and the idea that the spirit slept after death was a complete delusion. There were six things revealed to us about the life after death:—

"That the man was the same man five minutes after death as five minutes before it, except that he had passed through one more experience in life;

"That his character would grow;

"That he had memory;

"That he would be with Christ in Paradise;

"That there would be a mutual recognition, and

"That he would still have a great interest in the world he had left."

WILL Mrs. (or Miss?) Mary Moore who sends an article for our columns kindly furnish us with her address?

"Jon was uttering a profound truth when he remarked that 'the thing I feared is come upon me,' and over and over again his experience is being duplicated to-day. We fear the infection, the fear lowers the body-tone and resisting power, and lo! the thing that we feared is come upon us."—"Self Training," by H. ERNEST HUNT.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.1.

The Alliance possesses the largest library in existence of occult mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription 21 1s. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

CONCERNING SEVERAL THINGS.

In a leading article entitled "The Why and the Wherefore," we dealt some considerable time ago with a few of the simpler problems which beset the mind of the average inquirer. This time we propose to take a few of the difficulties which trouble minds rather more advanced in their studies, and which are more or less "questions in the air." There is only space to touch the fringes of them, but we may hope to treat suggestively things to which it is impossible to give exhaustive treatment.

First, then, let us take the telepathic theory in one of its many forms. Here is a seasoned inquirer (we have met examples in point) who, having consulted a medium, is told a number of perfectly true things of which the medium could not have obtained knowledge by any normal means. "But," says our inquirer, "I knew these things; therefore the medium read my mind." Now we do not deny for a moment the possibility of thought-transference. We even admit that the inferior types of medium appear to give as spirit communications a good deal of thought-transference from the sitter mixed with psychometrically-derived information. But this theory that all the facts known to a sitter and recited to him by a medium are necessarily thought-transference breaks down the moment we start seriously thinking about it. A spirit communicator who wishes to identify himself to a friend must needs recall facts known to that friend, but unknown to the medium. If every time he does this, his efforts are put down to telepathy on the part of the medium, an avenue that might lead to valuable knowledge is closed by a misleading word. "But," says the inquirer, "he should give me information not in my mind. Then there would be no question of telepathy." Would there not, indeed? Our inquirer knows little of the resources of that wonderful word. The root-and-branch telepathic theorist would claim that all the information in the human mind anywhere in the world has first to be exhausted before his theory can be set aside. Nay, if a fact is disclosed and afterwards verified, all those who knew the fact being dead, the telepathic theorist has still some cards in hand. It is "deferred telepathy," he will tell you. The thought has remained somewhere (in the air presumably!) and the medium has "picked it up." Drive him from that position (if you can) and he falls back triumphantly on a large and shining hypothesis—the world-soul, a cosmic reservoir of human memories, from which the gifted psychic may pick sufficient material to create the impression that he is actually in touch with some departed human being who in life made his contribution to the memory-fund.

At this point the argument becomes in its way amusing. We have met it in several forms; we are always meeting it. Of some people it has been said that they cannot see the wood for the trees. Of others we might say that they cannot see the trees for the wood. In short, we are confronted with our old friends, the Universal and the Particular. If the theorist thought a little more deeply he would see that the existence of a cosmic reservoir of memories, which we do not dispute, does not in any way invalidate the idea of individual minds and memories; ante-mortem and post-mortem. Some of our transcendental thinkers are impatient of the idea of individual spirit existence because it savours of "egotism." And, to put it vulgarly, they "plump" for the Universal. We plead for a balanced view, the golden mean between two extremes of idea.

As to the telepathic theory in itself, we cannot do better at this point than quote the words of one of the ablest of practical psychic investigators, Professor Hyslop:—

The evidence for telepathy is very small compared with that for the existence of spirits and of communication with them, and the evidence of telekinesis [movement of objects without contact] is not one thousandth as good or as strong as that for spirit communication. But it is perfectly respectable to believe in such things . . . because it is surmised that they either do away with spirits or do not involve any credulity to believe in them.

One is inclined at times to get a little impatient with the theorists because, not to put too fine a point on it, it is so obvious that their fine-spun and erudite theories are not so much the offspring of philosophy as of fear, plain, blank intellectual cowardice. On this question of spirit existence many an unlettered man and woman could teach the learned psychic theorist—first, because it is a human and not simply a scientific question; and second, because the unlearned are often quicker to recognise a fact than are those whose minds have become blurred with abstract ideas. When Sir Walter Scott, noticing that the sheep lay on the windy side of the hill, observed that if he were a sheep he would choose the sheltered side, the shepherd replied, "Eh, Sir Walter, if you were a sheep you'd have mair sense." On some matters of fact in daily life and living we would rather trust the judgment of the man in the street than the professor in the study. He would have "mair sense."

In conclusion, a word on some problems in spirit communication which involve our prejudices of class, caste and colour. The higher we rise in spiritual evolution the clearer it becomes that the only true law of association is *sympathy*. It is stronger than all the codes and customs of rank and race. And although we hear much absurd talk concerning the visits of the great and wise minds of the next world to circles with whom they were not likely to fraternise on earth, it is as well not to forget that there are other bonds besides those which on earth appear to form the only laws of association. An American visitor to our shores, some years before the war, expressed his amusement at the meeting between a village squire and a labourer—there was so much patronage on the one hand and so much servility on the other. "In my country," said the American, "it would have been 'Hullo, George!' on one side, and 'Mornin', Jim' on the other." We have reason to believe that the world beyond is even larger than America, and, in the best sense of the word, still more democratic.

THE DANGERS OF CREDULITY.

Spiritualism and Christian Science, and in a lesser degree, Theosophy, are no negligible or despicable phenomena. But those whose belief in one or other of them is most firm have all the more reason to pray to be saved from their friends. For no cause suffers from anything more than it does from its own well-meaning but ill-disciplined supporters. These acclaim anything and everything that appears to be supernatural as being the direct product of the working of superhuman powers. A ghost story is to them evidence of survival, beside which the *consensus gentium* and the conclusions of religion or philosophy sink into insignificance. The God who can be found neither in the Bible, nor the Church, nor in the social order, nor the slow evolution of the ages, nor in the mind of man, is rediscovered in the planchette and the trance medium. In this way disservice is done to a whole range of phenomena which covers some of the most important problems of psychology and the nature of man in general. . . . What comes as a revelation must be continuous with the whole system of our knowledge which is founded on the experience gained by normal means.—"Visions," a sermon by Dr. W. F. Cobb.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Mrs. Etta Wriedt, the wonderful Direct Voice medium, arrived in England in the early part of this week. The present is Mrs. Wriedt's fourth visit to this country.

Mr. W. T. Stead was responsible for Mrs. Wriedt's first visit. Early in 1911 he wrote to Admiral Osborne Moore in America asking him to recommend a suitable psychic for "Julia's Bureau." Admiral Moore mentioned Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit, as the very person of all others for the purpose Mr. Stead desired to achieve, and at Mr. Stead's invitation she came to England, staying for two and a half months. Her subsequent visits were in 1912 and 1913.

We are asked to state that Mrs. Wriedt has not yet been able to obtain suitable quarters, and until this is done she will be unable to see friends.

So the mystery of the oil showers at the Rectory at Swanton Novers has been "solved"—and by a conjuror. The young girl, it is stated, was discovered throwing a cup of water on the ceiling, and confessed the whole matter.

The disciples of sturdy common sense will now smile more blandly than ever at those deluded folk who were inclined to suspect some poltergeist agency. But the latter might retort that on one occasion of stone-throwing phenomena a boy was discovered throwing the stones, and yet during the manifestations rocks were hurled that no boy or man could lift. In the case at Norfolk the Rector is reported to have said that "the stuff came from the ceilings in gallons," and to have added, "we were practically flooded out." However, we know nothing of the facts, and can therefore offer no opinion.

Sir Sydney Olivier, we note, wrote to "The Times" offering the suggestion that the manifestations had all the characteristics of poltergeist phenomena. This theory was supported by the following letter to "The Times" from the Rev. H. P. Bryan, who wrote from Askerswell Rectory, Dorchester. He said: "The 'mystery' house at Swanton Novers is my old home, which I well remember being built nearly 60 years ago. Similar phenomena occurred in this parish, but with this difference, that the showers were not of oil but of stones, and they came not in the day but in the night. People came from a distance to witness these mysteries, attributed to supernatural forces, immense pieces of rock being hurled from one room to another, and all supposed to come from the ceiling. They ceased altogether, however, when an hysterical girl left the house for another, which was soon found to be on fire."

Commenting on Mr. Whately Smith's paper on Dr. Crawford's experiments, already noticed by us (p. 265), the "Westminster Gazette" remarks, "We appear now to be within measurable distance of establishing the existence of some force, hitherto unrecognised by science, by which a quasi-material substance, capable of acting upon matter, is projected at will from a human body, and again at will withdrawn."

"Our opinions concerning the nature both of the physical and of the mental world in which we live," the "Westminster" continues, "have undergone profound modifications in recent years. It may be that a further modification will be necessary to cover such phenomena as Dr. Crawford sets before us. If the result should be that further light is thrown on the relations of mind and matter an important advance will have been made."

The innocent tambourine has excited the ire of many commentators on spirit phenomena. Now we find the "Westminster" having a tilt at the table. It says: "In reading Mr. Whately Smith's report one asks oneself whether observation would not be facilitated by more exact and more specially contrived scientific apparatus. Why, for example should the levitating force be directed upon a table? Is not this a relic of the old, unscientific tradition in which tables played a part chiefly because they were a convenient article of furniture, which every potentially 'spirit-rapping' household possessed? From the laboratory standpoint the table has obvious defects, not the least of which is the heavy shadow it casts below."

But why is not a table as satisfactory an object for levitation as any other? The fact of its casting a shadow has no relevance, because Dr. Crawford's experiments have been carried out in full light. Sir William Crookes devised a delicate, scientific instrument with which he successfully tested the powers of D. D. Home. With what result? Those who were ready to be convinced were convinced; those who doubted, continued to doubt. At the same time we note with pleasure the same tone of the comments in the "Westminster Gazette." It is not the first time that this journal has published enlightened views on psychic subjects.

"God make the world one State" was the anthem with which the International Conference on Labour and Religion, at Browning Hall, Walworth, on September 5th brought its labours to a close.

In the course of a statement drawn up by the Conference, for issue to friends and adherents of the Labour movement throughout the world, was this very striking pronouncement: "An unquenchable faith in the future, a certainty (derived not from experience) of the coming of a higher and better social order, a conviction rooted in a sphere above and beyond the material sphere."

The Bishop of London, it will be remembered, in an address in Hyde Park on Sunday, July 27th, said that those who had passed over were the same five minutes after death as they were before. Dr. Ingram is evidently consistent, because, speaking in London in 1911, he expressed the same view at greater length, and in almost identical words. Looking through Mrs. Mary Davies' interesting book, "My Psychic Recollections" (published 1912), we found the Bishop of London's remarks quoted on pp. 169-170. We reproduce them elsewhere in this issue.

A correspondent in "Common Sense," who objects to Mr. Jerome K. Jerome taking Spiritualism seriously, holds that it is impossible to persuade a convinced Spiritualist of his error. To this complimentary testimony from an opponent Mr. Jerome K. Jerome adds: "There I agree with him. I am thinking of the still doubtful."

The reason for the firm faith of the convinced Spiritualist is splendidly expressed in those brave words of Gerald Massey: "My faith in our future life is founded upon reality, of my own personal experience. These facts have given me the proof palpable that our very own human identity and intelligence do persist after the blind of darkness has been drawn down in death. The Spiritualist who has plumbed the void of death, as I have, has established a faith that can neither be undermined nor overthrown."

The italics are ours. The words quoted are from the Preface to "My Lyrical Life," the last edition of Gerald Massey's poetical works. Those who have not read his golden little book, "Concerning Spiritualism," written more than forty years ago, should do so. It is out of print, but is in the Alliance library.

The Rev. Harold Anson, in an address at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on September 5th, spoke on the power of religion in the restoration of bodily health. He referred to healing results achieved by means of Christian Science, and stated that he saw no reason why similar results should not be obtained in the Church of England.

The Vicar of St. Martin's, Mr. Anson added, would allow him to speak on Fridays during September on the subject, and in October to hold a special service at which the congregation, on behalf of themselves or others, could make special supplication for the healing of the body.

"Last Letters from the Living Dead Man" has been published in America by Elsa Barker, whose former volumes, "Letters from a Living Dead Man," and "War Letters from a Living Dead Man," will be remembered. The present book consists of a series of communications from Judge Hatch, received between February, 1917, and February, 1918.

There are thirty-one letters, forming (says the "Progressive Thinker," of Chicago) an organic discussion of the problems confronting the world, and, particularly America. Speaking of "The Aquarian Age," Judge Hatch says: "There will be much rebellion in the beginning. Things are not as stable as they seemed four years ago." (The letter is dated February 2nd, 1918.) "The war has proved that they were not really stable. The wave of psychic research that is now sweeping across the world will wear thin the veil between the visible and the invisible. More and more men and women will live in two worlds at the same time; for the two worlds occupy the same space, and their differences are differences of consciousness, of vibration, the latter including a difference in states of matter."

The Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society at Kobe reports (says "The Times") that another new doctrine of life has arisen in Japan. It calls itself the "Great Spirit Way Belief," and has obtained considerable notice in the

Press. It is philosophical and mystical, and claims unlimited beneficent influence over mind and body. It professes to unite, contain, and be superior to all other religions and systems of philosophy.

Eighteen volumes give in detail the principles of the system. The entrance fee for membership is three yen (6s.), and the association fee is 12 yen (£1 4s.). For a week's spiritual treatment—which is considered a sufficient period of time to cure any disease—the fee is five yen (10s.). Correspondence courses are given; and, when certain examinations have been successfully passed and theses written, diplomas from headquarters are granted. An evangelistic band of 12 members has been founded. Headquarters for the cult has been established in Tokyo, where daily lectures are given and spiritual healing is practised. World evangelization is aimed at.

"SIGNS AND WONDERS" AND THE INMOST LIGHT.

SOME MORE HINTS TO INQUIRERS.

In the excellent "Hints to Inquirers" in *LIGHT* (p. 188), it is written, "We must see for ourselves the conclusions to which our facts point. No one can see them for us. If we weakly surrender our own judgment to that of others we shall be led to confusion and to doubt."

While we may, and to a great extent must, go to others for facts, still our conclusions should be our own. But many Spiritualists prefer to reverse this order, and while perpetually seeking new phenomena never pause to think of the significance of those they have already received. It is to such persons that A. J. Davis refers in his "Penetralia," page 240, "How many insincere persons there are who bring merely their perceptive faculties to bear upon the sublimest questions!" recalling the text "Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged."

As a type of what a Spiritualist séance should aim to become, we may with advantage study the original Pentecostal circle held by the apostles, "together with certain women," in an upper chamber, free from disturbance. The essential difference between this first gathering and the average circle of to-day lies, no doubt, in the mental attitude of the members. In the former case they assembled with a purely spiritual intent, and "with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer"; whereas to-day, although a séance may open with prayer, still the main object in view is to procure convincing phenomena. Seeking the highest, they not only achieved what they sought, but received also many objective evidences of spirit power; whereas to-day our search after "tests" and for something striking, to re-convince ourselves, leads too often "to confusion and to doubt." Not that objective evidence, rightly considered, is to be condemned—when it is regarded as a lure to catch the attention of the material intellect and draw it into contemplation of spiritual truths. In fact, it is not long before we find Peter and John, and "their own company," praying "that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus." But the apostles did not seek phenomena in order to bolster their own faith, rather it was their faith that produced the phenomena; and perhaps the prayer itself may be regarded more as an acknowledgment than as a request, seeing that signs and wonders had already been showered upon them unsought.

It is interesting to observe that the effects produced upon a mixed audience by the signs and wonders were very much the same in kind as those with which we are familiar, while "Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven," were amazed and marvelled, "others mocking said, They are filled with new wine." So to-day, while men devoted to the study of truth in any form take notice and are amazed, the others mock with easy and ribald jest. There are those among the orthodox of various churches who assert that our spiritualistic gifts are none other than the magical gifts of Simon Magus, whom Peter rebuked because he "thought to obtain the gift of God with money"—doubtless because of the higher phenomena which come with the Holy Spirit. It is true that the term "Spiritualism" is applied to phenomena of both kinds, and it behoves us to distinguish between them, and ever to seek contact with the highest spirits, who dispense help and healing to mankind, rather than be satisfied with the lower and more material spirits who pander to man's curiosity.

It would be well for us to learn from Peter's rebuke the true way of obtaining "the gift of God," even though we may not be tempted, by the spiritual gifts of any of St. Peter's successors, to repeat the sin of Simon. And in these days of physical science even the wonders of genuine magic serve a useful purpose, in combating the crudest form of materialism, and in forcing closed minds to entertain the idea of spirit influence—if only as an open question. The Pentecostal outpouring of spirit forces, confined to a few people "of one heart and soul," and to one place, came with extraordinary intensity; to-day our spirit influence, extensive as humanity

itself, is correspondingly weaker. If Peter could cite the prophecy of Joel as in course of fulfilment, even before he had been taught in a dream that the Gentiles also were to receive the Spirit, assuredly we to-day may, with as much reason, take the same message as indicative of "the last days"—not of the world perhaps, but, as before, of a Dispensation.

We seem on very familiar ground when we read of the arrest of Peter and John, because they had used the post-mortem appearances of Jesus to prove the resurrection of the dead; but on this occasion they were released after a night's detention "because of the people." Let us indulge a hope that even so, to-day, the people will demand better treatment for our mediums. While it is hardly to be expected that our judges, to whom even the common man is little more than a "deposition," could have any personal acquaintance with the characteristics of a medium, still a knowledge of the fundamental law of spirit life—that "like attracts like"—is essential to the right judging of mediumship. When a fool with a lie on his lips goes to consult a medium, if the medium be genuine, the seeker will, in all probability, get folly and deception. Whereas, if a so-called medium were really a cunning rogue robbing the public under the guise of mediumship, he, or she, would be more likely to detect the detective, and tell him that the "spirits" were not working in his case. In short, the medium, because he is genuine, may be condemned for a fraud practised by the detective.

For a good illustration of this possibility let us turn to that instructive and palpably honest book, "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron, where, on page 269, she relates how confusion arose when a friend "asked a question relating to an entirely imaginary situation—just to see—as he afterward explained." This led the informing spirit, Mary K., to lay down a rule that "The integrity of the seeker is the messenger's only protection from disintegrating force . . . absolute sincerity and candour are essential to the maintenance of a connection with constructive forces, in these interviews." It is noticeable that when a little innocent deception, "upon misprision growing, comes home again"—it seems somehow to have lost its innocence!

Thus we see that Spiritualism is pretty much what we make it. It pays us back in kind and with interest, adding evidence to faith, suspicion to doubt, and lies to deception; and yet we often think that we are treated unworthily. Even when it reflects our soul, we do not always admire the image. Just as, in everyday life, when we see our own imperfections exteriorised to us in another person, we are very ready to declaim against them. Beware the man much given to invective—whether against mankind or merely against mediums! Perhaps in the spirit world the tie of affinity will bring us punishment and correction, by holding us to the people who display before our eyes the faults which to-day lie behind the fields of our direct vision—people who turn toward us the points of our fretful quills.

B. M. GODSAL.

Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.

August 7th, 1919.

FORMS SEEN IN A HOME CIRCLE.

A lady, whose contributions to our columns have been many and welcome, sends us part of a letter she has received from her brother in New Zealand who, she states, is entirely reliable and a keen critic. He describes the wonderful experiences of himself and his wife in their quiet sittings at home:—

Meg and I sit regularly twice a week, and we can now distinctly see etherial spirit forms. The room is sometimes full of them, so many that though we both see the same forms frequently, still, as one cannot look everywhere at once we each often see forms that the other does not notice. They come and go quickly, as a rule, but sometimes remain stationary in front of us for a while. They are getting more and more distinct, and I expect that if we can keep on sitting here long enough (I mean if we do not have to go to another town and break up the conditions before they become established) they may become solid materialisations. We cannot yet distinguish features, but the figures are becoming distinctive. Emmie's petite figure both Meg and I are sure we have seen, and one evening Meg felt a hand touching her forehead.

It is a most beautiful experience. The figures seem so lovely, containing in themselves, as it were (it is difficult to describe), a soft etherial light. They are attired in flowing white drapery which seems as if secured at the top of the head and falling in showers of soft light on each side of the face and over the shoulders, fading away below the waist.

No one ever sits with us, nor will be permitted to do so until we get into communication with our visitors and get their consent. It is to us a deeply solemn thing. We commence with the Lord's Prayer, and I pray to God as best I can from my heart. We then sing a few Spiritualist hymns. At the close Meg says a prayer and I say what may be in my mind to the spirit people present, though by that time we cannot see any. We close by singing the Spiritualists' Doxology, and then I light the gas. I wish you and L— could be with us at these sittings. You would not have another doubt.

HOW THE "THOUGHT-READING" THEORY BREAKS DOWN.

AN AMERICAN BUSINESS MAN'S EXPERIENCES.

The issue of *LIGHT* of July 5th threw illuminating rays on the qualifications of some prominent people to express their convictions on the genuineness of psychic phenomena.

It appears that Lord Haldane (page 215) after but one séance felt qualified to say that there was "a good deal of fraud and imposture" in Spiritualism, and to add something about "a deficiency in quality," and that the experiences of another "authority," Mr. E. F. Benson, who is quoted (page 214) as expressing an adverse opinion, have been so limited as to be entirely covered by mere "thought reading."

In other columns we read that Sir Wm. Crookes' trained mind was not justified in coming to a positive opinion in the case of Miss Cook till between thirty and forty sésances had been under study, and that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in his Queen's Hall address stated that it was no less than twenty-five years before he made up his mind.

It seems to be me it would call for no little temerity to assume that Lord Haldane and Mr. Benson have such unusual mentalities that they can decide, without investigation, questions on which Sir Wm. Crookes and Sir A. Conan Doyle only felt qualified to express opinions after years of study.

The late Thomson J. Hudson, author of the "Law of Psychic Phenomena," says people who do not know that these things are true (I quote from memory) are not entitled to be called prejudiced—they are simply ignorant. That seems harsh, and I would soften asperities by quoting one who has aptly said that what is frequently referred to as "thinking" is too often but a re-arrangement of our prejudices.

Like Mr. Benson, I, too, at one time was positive that what was told to the sitters at sésances was "mind reading." If I had known anything about telepathy I should have seen the difficulties in the way of such an explanation and would have known that as a blanket theory to cover all the facts it was untenable. But at that time I was, as Hudson would say, simply ignorant.

Among my first experiences was the following: My business has required me to make advertising contracts with a large number of papers. The late Dr. Slesinger, editor of a monthly devoted to Spiritualism, asked for a contract. I was "positive" that the phenomena on which his beliefs were based were covered by "thought reading," and told him so, and that I was not interested.

To my great surprise he said he was a medium, and if I would give him a contract he would prove to me then and there that I was wrong. I was to be the sole judge. He stepped into the outer office while I prepared twenty ballots, each one inch by three inches, nineteen of them containing fictitious names and one the name of a dead friend. These I carefully rolled up into little pellets and placed in my hat.

The doctor then returned. He already knew the full name I had written, where the person had died, and the nature of the last illness. But it might be covered by "thought reading," although it was so sudden and definite that it almost stunned me, for this was in my own office without paraphernalia. But even telepathy would have to be stretched beyond the facts, for while I had the name (E. L. W—) in my mind I had no thought of his last sickness or the city where he passed away.

While I had read of telepathy I had never met with it before, and was profoundly impressed. But he soon left me no room for doubt or equivocation. Said he, "Does anybody on earth know which one of the pellets contains the name?" I replied that no living being knew—not even myself. Then said he, "My guide knows. He gave me the name, last illness and place of death, and will tell me, from the next world, which pellet to open."

I picked them up one by one. When about two-thirds of them had been passed, as I held one in my hand he became considerably agitated and almost shouted at me to hold it. It was the right one. I gave him his contract, but could not overcome my beliefs and prejudices so quickly, and to satisfy myself that it was not an accident or coincidence I later went through the same test with him three times more, on one of which occasions I had with me a Member of Congress* of the United States and on another the foreman of my type-foundry, a German mechanic of fine qualifications who, being an agnostic, was greatly astonished. His experience, too long to relate here, was so impressive that I may refer to it later.

The doctor did not fail in a single instance. It is obvious in such cases as these, in which no human mind has knowledge of the desired fact, that "thought reading" as an explanation utterly fails.

It is such experiences as these that give serious investigators pause, but the pseudo-investigator, innocent of knowledge of the real subtleties, finds the commonest and

most superficial explanation covers his limitations and is prodigal with ink in the restatement of his prejudices. Was it Emerson who said "beliefs are deadly things"?

San Francisco.
August 1st, 1919.

EWING.

THE GHOST OF MARPLE HALL.

A very good ghost story appeared recently in "Country Life" concerning one of the ancestral portraits hanging on the walls of the principal staircase of Marple Hall, Cheshire, the seat of Mr. J. H. Bradshaw Isherwood. The portrait is of Moll of Brabyns, who married into the family about the middle of the eighteenth century, and it represents an evil-looking woman holding a small spaniel in her arms. She is said to haunt the house, looking for her wedding-ring. No ring is to be seen on the wedding finger of her left hand. Of the ghostly incidents narrated below we are told that they happened only a dozen years ago, and that the facts were all noted and written down at the time and are corroborated by several witnesses:—

"In the summer of 1907 the four-year-old grandson of the present owner paid a visit to Marple, his parents being abroad. He was put with his nurses into the old nursery, a large room at the top of the house. The first night of his arrival he awoke between the hours of twelve and two, complaining to his nurse of the 'muzzy old woman' who was sitting at the foot of his bed. He described exactly the appearance of the woman in the portrait, and he also spoke of the dog she carried. The child did not seem at all alarmed, only annoyed, complaining that he did not like the old woman, and imitating her sour face. The nurse soothed the child, and after a time he went to sleep. Every night during the week of his stay the same thing happened between the same hours. The nurse saw nothing. In October of the same year, 1907, the boy again paid a visit to his grandparents and, as before, occupied the same room with his nurse. The first night of their arrival the nurse put the boy to bed in his little cot, which had high sides, impossible for a child so young to get out of, and went down to her supper, leaving a night-light burning, and with instructions to a maid next door to go at once to the child if she heard him call. The maid presently joined the nurse at supper, reporting that all was quiet. Shortly after this the child's voice was heard outside the servants' hall, and he was found by his horrified nurse standing with bare feet and only his little nightshirt on, quite warm and not at all frightened. Asked who brought him downstairs, he replied, 'Daddy came and put the light on and carried me down.' That night the child's father was at Segovia. The maids, all greatly alarmed, rushed upstairs to find, when they reached the room, that it was impossible to open the door—the only one into the room—although it was not locked. After great efforts, the door was forced open and a large armchair was found jammed between it and a chest of drawers. The electric light was full on, and one side of the child's crib was down—an impossible thing for him to have accomplished himself.

"Seven years later, the story having been forgotten, the child's younger brother, also aged four, was given the same room. He had no disagreeable experience, but he was continually speaking of an old woman with a dog, who told him that he must go away.

"The theory is that Moll of Brabyns, having had none of her own, resents the appearance of children in the house at all, and that—in the case of the elder child—his guardian angel must have assumed the shape of his father in order to remove the child from the harmful influence in the room without unduly alarming him. Needless to say, the room is no longer used as a nursery."

THE Editor, who has been confined to his house for some days with an attack of gastritis, asks the indulgence of correspondents for any delay or omissions consequent on his absence.

Mrs. F. M. FINLAY, now recovering from a serious operation, desires to thank the many friends whose affection and sympathy have helped, by their sustaining power, to carry her safely through the crisis.

In its September issue, "The Young Man and Woman," edited by the Rev. Walter Wynn, reprints with some commendatory remarks the leading article, "Spirit Ministry and Spirit Direction," which appeared in *LIGHT* of July 5th, 1919.

THE MYSTIC'S RAPTURE.—In the highest rapture I ever was in, my soul passed into a fearful extremity of experience: she was burned with so terrible an excess of bliss that she was in great fear and anguish because of this excess. Indeed she was so overcome by this too great realisation of the strength of God that she was in terror of both God and joy. . . . I am not able to think that even in Heaven the soul could endure such heights for more than a period. These heights are incomparably, unutterably beyond vision and union. They are the uttermost extremity of that which can be endured by the soul, at least until she has re-risen to greater altitudes of holiness in ages to come. —"THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN."

* The Member of Congress referred to, the Hon. B—H—, since deceased, was so impressed that he returned with friends and had the experience repeated.

WATCHES REPAIRED BY A SPIRIT.

Miss Kathleen Hicks sends the following narrative:—

From 1915 until July, 1919, I was head cook at a hospital near where I live. I went from home each day to my work, so you will understand that the question of time was an important one to me. I used a very good silver lever watch, which kept excellent time, but unfortunately one day I dropped it, with the result that it would not go. I sent it to a watch-maker in Liverpool, who failed to repair it. I then sent it to a man near where I live, who also failed to make it go.

I then put the watch away in a locked jewellery cabinet in my own room where we sit each week in circle. I then took to using a little gun-metal watch I had in a purse-bag, a watch at least twelve years old; this went for a time and then refused to go any more. I did not bother to take this to be mended; it was old and could not be worth much. Now comes the point of my story.

About three months back we had the privilege of having Mrs. Roberts Johnson at our house for a trumpet séance. During her visit she happened to tell me of a watch which some gentleman could not get repaired and of how her son, Billy, in the spirit world for the past twenty years, mended this watch at a séance of hers at which this man was present.

At our own séance that evening I said to Billy, who nearly always speaks through the trumpet at Mrs. Roberts Johnson's séances, "I wish you could mend my watch for me." I cannot say that I thought about it afterwards till my work at the hospital was finished and I was going over to Ireland. It then occurred to me that I must take my watch with me and see if I could get it mended. I unlocked my cabinet, got out the watch and wound it up, and I am glad to say it has gone ever since without having to be sent for any repairs. I then wondered whether it could be possible that Billy had mended my other watch which was so old and worn. Well, that watch also I found was repaired and both have gone ever since, a matter of over six weeks.

A PSYCHIC BOOK IN ICELANDIC.

The psychic photograph obtained by E. N. was the result of a visit made on my advice, and was a triumphant success. Recently E. N. paid me a visit for the purpose of exhibiting the really remarkable photos she has obtained, and I can confirm all that Miss Dallas says about it. Anyone who cannot see the identity between the spirit photo and recent photos of the young man taken shortly before he was killed must be totally incapable of accurate observation.

I now possess a fine collection of the work of the Crewe Circle, sufficient to place the genuineness of the powers of Mr. Hope and his colleagues beyond all possible doubt, and to establish the truth of spirit photography and identity. This evidence will be fully set forth in the second edition of my work, "Man's Survival after Death," which is now in the Press, and is expected to appear at the beginning of October.

I have just heard that the first edition has been published in Icelandic by Professor Neilsson of the Reykjavik University, who informs me that it is the only book on psychic subjects in the language.

C. L. TWEEDALE.

"NO PRODUCT OF A MEDIUM'S BRAIN."

Dorothy Grenside, discussing in the September number of "Vision" the subject of Automatic Writing, holds that very little matter of importance has been gained through this source. She has, however, a good word to say for the "unusually interesting series of automatic writings published under the title of 'Letters from the Other Side'"—a book already favourably reviewed in our columns. "The communications," Mrs. Grenside remarks, "are curiously similar in style to the writings of a well-known clergyman who was much before the public eye until he laid aside his garment of physical flesh a brief while ago. . . [They] follow in the main those of similar writings, but they have a certain charm of style and sincerity of feeling that drive the reader irresistibly to the conclusion that here is no product of a medium's brain, but rather a contact with a living personality, as sure 'a focus of will, intelligence and feeling' as when with us in the flesh. . . To read the book is to realise the possibility that these messages may be from one whose congregation loved him as a father, and whose church was packed Sunday after Sunday by crowds drawn not only by his eloquence, but by the love he breathed for God and fellow men."

"It is the art of mankind to polish the earth, and everyone who works is scrubbing in some part."—THOREAU.

There is some connection . . . between a perception of light and these veridical psychic experiences, for the two are associated in accounts from people who know nothing of others' experiences. . . It may be that the spirit, in manifesting, is acting on the ether as we act on matter when we communicate with each other by speech, and that the first thing produced by such action is light, which is, of course, an ethereal pulsation.—J. ARTHUR HILL, in "Man is a Spirit."

A WOMAN MYSTIC.

No author's name is appended to "The Golden Fountain or The Soul's Love for God" (3/- net, John M. Watkins, Cecil Court, W.C.2). It is simply described as "being some thoughts and confessions of one of His lovers," but, whoever the writer, we feel that she is in the true succession of the mystics. The book is thrilled through with a passion of spiritual devotion which few of us can either enter into or understand. Early in its pages the author tells us that she experienced three conversions: the first two of terrible suffering, "an unbearable, inexplicable pain of remorse;" the third of a great and marvellous joy "in which it is no exaggeration to say that for a few moments I seemed to receive God and all the freedom of the Heavens into my soul."

"How can a contact with God be in any way described? It is not seeing, but meeting and fusion with awareness. The soul retaining her own individuality and consciousness to an intense degree, but imbued with and fused into a life of incredible intensity, which passes through the soul vitalities and emotions of a life so new, so vivid, so amazing, that she knows not whether she has been embraced by love or by fire, by joy or by anguish: for so fearful is her joy that she is almost unable to endure the might of it."

So might some saintly nun of olden days have described her experiences, but no cloistered celibate, mortifying a sickly frame with harsh austerities, could have written the following passage:—

"To the lover of God all affections go up and become enclosed, as it were, into one affection, which is Himself; so that we have no love for anyone or anything apart from Him. In this is included, in a most deep and mysterious fashion, marriage-love in all its aspects. In every way it can become a sacrament: there is nothing in it which is not holy. In no way does the marriage bond of the body separate the spirit from acceptableness to God. But I was some time before I could arrive at this, and could see marriage as the physical prototype in this physical world of the spiritual union with Himself in the spiritual world. And this was arrived at, not by prudish questionings and criticisms, but by remembering that this relationship between men and women is His thought, His plan, not ours. It is our opposition to the passage of the Holy Will which causes all the distress and uneasiness of life. This bond of earthly marriage is of the flesh and can be kept by the body, and yet the heart, mind and soul remain in lovely, perfect chastity; and I found that this exquisite freedom—after prolonged endeavours on the part of the soul and the creature—was at length given them as a gift by act of grace, and remained in permanence without variation."

Her only grief is that others do not share her experience. But they can do so if they will.

"The soul has six wings: love, obedience, humility, simplicity, perseverance and courage. With these she can attain God."

THE CALL.

Enemies cornered and red with rage,
A hungering world with a strange new need—
Time to be stirring, time to engage,
Time for men of the Viking breed.

Men that matter, men that can do,
Women fearless and kind and wise,
Come, for the new Life breaking through
Calls its children to wake and rise.

Leave the witling who stares and gapes,
Or, moonstruck, mumbles some ancient dream,
The morbid seeker for vampire shapes—
Out from the shadows, follow the Gleam!

Come, for the Old House totters and bows;
Crazy with age, its rafters fall;
Leave the laggards to drift and drowse;
Up and ready, answer the call!

Bring sword and trowel, like those of old
Who fought and builded with head and hand—
The Veil is rending, our eyes behold,
Through dim cloud curtains with sheen of gold,
The Hills of Vision, the Promised Land!

D.G.

G. B. N., a lady residing not far from this office, narrates a strange premonitory dream. On the 2nd ult. she dreamt that her fiancé had died, that she was kneeling by his grave, that among those present at his funeral were two friends of his, Mr. L. and Mr. V.; and that as the mourners moved away Mr. L. came up, put his arm through hers and led her away. At the time of her dream her fiancé was apparently quite well, but five days later he suddenly dropped dead. Among the mourners at the funeral were the two friends she had seen in her dream. All was over, and she was stumbling away from the grave when someone hurried after her and took her arm. On turning round she found that it was Mr. L.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1.—6.30. Mrs. Mary Inkpen. September 21st, Mr. T. Olman Todd.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2.—11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 6.30, Mr. P. E. Beard. Wednesday, September 17th, 7.30, Mr. Thomas Ella.

Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.—7, Mr. Punter, address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, Mrs. Bloodworth. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Stenson.

Croydon.—117b, High-street.—11, Mrs. Julie Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Annie Boddington.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mrs. Alice Jamrach.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E.—11, Mrs. E. Marriott; 6.30, Mr. H. E. Hunt; Wednesday, Mrs. Butterworth, of Barrow.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.—6.30, Mr. Ernest Meads. Wednesday, 7.30, meeting for members and associates only.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mr. G. Tayler Gwinn. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Mary Crowder, address and clairvoyance.

Woolwich and Plumstead.—Perseverance Hall, Villas-rd., Plumstead.—7, Mrs. Harvey, address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, 8, Mr. Wright, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton.—Athenæum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mr. Blake, President, S.C.U., addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. R. Gurd.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30 and 7, addresses and clairvoyance, Mrs. Mary Gordon; also Monday, 7.15, Tuesday, 3 p.m., and Thursday, 7.15, public meeting for inquirers, questions and clairvoyance. Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week-end, Mrs. Marriott.

Holloway.—Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station).—11, Mr. H. M. Thompson; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. P. Scholey. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Alice Harper, of Australia. 21st, Harvest Festival; 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 7, Mr. T. O. Todd. Gifts of flowers, plants, vegetables, etc., thankfully received. Send in, if possible, on the Saturday evening, to assist in the decoration. Take notice: "Whist drive," Saturday, 28th, 7.30; silver collection at door; in aid of Building Fund.

LITTLE ILFORD SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALISTS.—Mrs. Alice Jamrach, as financial secretary of the New Church Fund connected with this Society, desires to acknowledge with sincere thanks the receipt of £2 2s. from Mrs. Fugeman, of Bishops Stortford.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction ...	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road ...	...	7-0
Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill ...	11-0	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ...	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street ...	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...	...	7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earlham Hall, Earlham Grove ...	...	7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ...	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amburst Road ...	...	7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone ...	...	6-30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street ...	...	6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street ...	...	6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road ...	...	6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. ...	...	6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Bramar Road ...	...	6-30
*Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ...	...	7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ...	...	7-0
*Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane ...	...	7-0
*Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 634, High Road ...	...	7-0
*Upper Holloway, Grovedale Hall, Grovedale Road ...	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway ...	...	6-30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

By 'M.A. (Oxon.)'

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct seances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful seance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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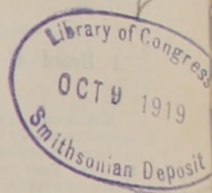
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NOTES BY THE WAY.

A daily newspaper tells us that "animals do dream," a question on which, as a lover of animals, we never harboured any doubt. We have observed the antics of our dog when, slumbering, he moaned over some disappointment, being worsted, perhaps, in some visionary encounter with another dog, or it may have been from vexation over the escape of that enemy of the canine species—a cat. Now and again the dog's legs would go through the pantomime of galloping. It was quite easy to guess what Fido was dreaming about. The discovery has led, in some quarters, to philosophy—of a sort. That is to say, the conclusion is that if animals dream they are probably very near akin to "man, proud man." Human superiority to the beast is challenged. What right has man to set himself up as an immortal being? Such a claim is based on pure sentiment, and so forth. We all know the argument; only some of us are a little surprised at the defective reasoning powers of these cynical thinkers, whose appeal is also to sentiment, a reactionary sentiment which, revolting against what it conceives to be human vanity rushes to the other extreme of misanthropic humility.

Many times have we read emotional appeals to man to abase himself in the presence, say, of the starry heavens or some other spectacle of the grandeur of Nature. So far, of course, as such sentiments applied to the question of reverence towards the manifestations of Deity we could understand them. But man's inferiority to some mighty sun or planet we could never see. The inferiority was merely a physical matter. We refused to stand mute and gasping in the presence of mere stupendous mass. How can man be inferior to that which he can weigh and measure and analyse? Such spurious sentimentalism is very much of the same type as that which tells us that the lower animals are our equals, which bids us observe that the dog dreams, therefore it has a psychological nature and therefore—much else which does not follow at all, except in a mind disposed to cynicism. We are not concerned here to enter into the question of the precise difference between man and the lower animals. There is probably no hard and fast line; it may be simply a matter of development, of evolution, a higher degree of consciousness involving self-consciousness, the sense of individuality. All life, we are told, is *one*.

Reading lately "The Man of Genius," by Cesare Lombroso, we came upon the following:—

Maudsley remarks that epileptics often believe themselves patriarchs and prophets. He thinks that by mistaking their hallucinations for divine revelations they have largely contributed to the foundation of religious beliefs. Ann

Lee, who founded the sect of Shakers, was an epileptic; who saw Christ come to her physically and spiritually. The vision which transformed Saint Paul from a persecutor into an apostle seems to have been of the same order.

This it may be remarked, in passing, was the conclusion of that same Lombroso who later, as a result of his investigations in psychic phenomena, became convinced of their reality and significance as proofs of human survival—a triumph of fact over theory. It may seem an undignified illustration, but whenever our clerical opponents seize upon the arguments against Spiritualism furnished by the materialistic school of which Lombroso was at one time a leader, we are reminded of an episode in Dickens' "Sketches By Boz." We mean the case of Mr. Augustus Cooper, who, while in a state of mental confusion during a quarrel, "expressed his entire concurrence" in an insulting observation directed against his friends. That blunder, as we remember, involved Mr. Augustus Cooper in terrible troubles afterwards. We foresee troubles for our theological critics equally, because the materialistic school of thinkers to whom they appeal are clear-headed enough to see that the psychic element in human history is all of a piece, whether ancient or modern. All that need be said on the question of madness and degeneracy is that there is a healthy "psychism" and a diseased one, a fact quite familiar to all who study the matter without bias.

Mr. H. G. Wells, in his famous book, "Mr. Britling Sees it Through," puts these pregnant observations into the mouth of the leading character in the story:—

You see, all organisation, with its implication of finality, is death. . . . What you organise you kill. Organised morals or organised religion or organised thought are dead morals and dead religion and dead thought. Yet some organisation you must have. . . . The unorganised side of life is the real life.

There is much more to the same effect. But we have given the essential portions of Mr. Britling's conclusions. And we are rather inclined to agree with them. You must have organisation, as he remarks, but it is the unorganised portion of a movement that supplies the life and power to the rest. That is the reason why, while appealing for organisation, we are not anxious to systematise the whole of our own movement, even if that were possible. We are aware of the existence of multitudes of people who, while accepting our facts and philosophy, remain free lances—unorganised. Many of them do more valuable work in that position than if they wore our distinctive livery. To put it in another way, the point of a spear may be more important than the butt, but it is very ineffective without it. And if we are faced with the paradox that the only sound form of organisation is that which is incomplete we are not disturbed. Life is full of these paradoxes.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

SIR O. LODGE AND A MEDICAL CRITIC.

The Editor of "The Medical Press" wrote as follows in the issue of September 3rd:—

My own position in regard to Spiritualism is that of the agnostic, inasmuch as I have not seriously studied the subject first hand. Nevertheless, I must confess to having a strong leaning towards scepticism in this matter. The *a priori* argument against the existence of departed spirits capable of revealing themselves to living humans seems to me overwhelming. Consider this one alone. The definite proof of the existence of such spirits would constitute a discovery beside which all the other discoveries of man taken together would pale, affording, as it would, unmistakable evidence of the survival of the personality after the disruption of the body. Seeing then what tremendous issues are involved in the problem of Spiritualism, it is difficult to believe that, if departed spirits, capable of revealing themselves to us, do actually hover about this planet of ours, the fact would not long since have been established beyond all cavil.

I may be asked how I reconcile this sceptical attitude with the fact that men of exceptional intellectual calibre and high scientific attainments, such as William Crookes (*sic*) and Oliver Lodge, to say nothing of such gifted men as Conan Doyle, are convinced and fervid believers.

That men of this stamp should accept evidence which to the average common-sense person seems palpably absurd, is a fact of supreme psychological interest. In attempting to explain it it is necessary to remember how largely feeling bulks in belief. Not only is belief itself a state of feeling—we say we *feel* convinced—but our beliefs are apt to be dominated by our feelings. We are all too apt to believe what we want to believe. The Spiritualist, intellectual and otherwise, is so burningly anxious to believe, that in investigating supposed spiritualistic phenomena his reason is not permitted to have free, unhampered sway.

In dealing with the dry facts of physical and chemical science, there is little opportunity for intellectual bamboozlement. The investigator is conscious that he is confronted by problems which are only capable of solution by close observation and reasoning; he is continually finding himself up against hard, unmistakable facts—facts, they say, are stubborn things—and if he arrives at conclusions at variance with them the untenability of his position, sooner or later, becomes obvious.

But when the problem to be investigated is no mere physical one, but involves so grave and stupendous an issue as the existence of a life hereafter, the opportunities for self-deception in the case of men of intense feeling are dangerously great. Such men as William Crookes (*sic*) and Oliver Lodge combine exceptional intellectual powers with a rich emotional endowment, a combination before which I bow in humble admiration, recognising as I do that true greatness of mind implies something more than the capacity for mechanical thinking. Nevertheless for all their intellectual wealth I venture to think that these great men have unconsciously been led astray by the very richness and intensity of their emotional endowment. If such is the case, the fact is one, as I say, of supreme psychological interest.

A COURTEOUS REJOINDER.

To the above Sir Oliver Lodge replied, in the issue of September 17th, as follows:—

Referring to your editorial notes on September 3rd, pages 176 and 177, the "strong leaning towards scepticism" to which you confess is very natural and proper. That is how most of us began, till we were confronted by facts, which, as you say, "are stubborn things." Your assumption that we were led by our emotions is not justified by reality. I was not "burningly anxious to believe" when I began investigating, and I have no reason to suppose that Crookes was either. The assumption is merely invented to explain something which appears otherwise unintelligible.

You speak of a "rich emotional endowment" with which some men are endowed. No doubt some men are, but I cannot claim to be one of them. That, again, is an assumption not based upon fact.

The argument that the discovery of the survival of personality would be a tremendous one and therefore would have been made long ago, is quite invalid. There is no reason to suppose that all the most important discoveries have already been made. There are no doubt *a priori* feelings, or so-called arguments, against accepting the evidence; but this apparently legitimate prejudice may, and ultimately will, have to give way to accumulated facts of observation. That the conclusions are unpopular in scientific circles is true enough, as also that those scientific men who testify to their gradual conviction suffer disability on that account. All that may be heartily admitted. But the business of a scientific man is to ascertain what is true, not what is popular. There is just as much possibility of error in denying these facts and conclusions as there is in accepting them. Posterity will recognise on which side truth lies, but during our present day and generation the path of worldly wisdom lies on the side of conservatism and orthodoxy. So,

historically, it has always been, when new chapters of knowledge begin to be opened and when hitherto unrecognised facts are clamouring for acceptance.

I have no complaint to make against your attitude, which sounds quite reasonable and is certainly polite. Nevertheless, in the long run, you and many others will find that with the best intentions you have been opposing the cause of truth and have been depending upon assumptions rather than upon facts.

THE L.S.A. MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND.

The L.S.A. Council and LIGHT gratefully acknowledge the following donations received since those recorded in previous issues:—

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Mrs. A. S. Marshall (3rd donation)	100	0	0
In response to the Rev. Stanley Gordon's suggestion—			
L. D. D.	10	0	0
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In Memory of Lieut. Gerald Clifton Woolven, R.F.A. (September 10th, 1918)	5	5	0
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"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND, 1919.

In addition to donations recorded in previous issues we have to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of the following sums:—

	£	s.	d.
M. Nissen (Copenhagen)	10	10	0
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THE FIXED IDEA.

The position of Mr. Walter Mann, the author of "The Follies and Frauds of Spiritualism" (Watts and Co., 3/6 net), is a simple one—it is that all spiritualist phenomena are fraudulent or delusions. He gives, as facts, various hypotheses how Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and other distinguished experimentalists might have been deceived. While some of these guesses may be useful to experimenters, as indicating how some fraudulent "mediums" have imitated genuine phenomena, it would be a waste of time seriously to criticise Mr. Mann's hypotheses regarding what might have taken place at séances at which he was not present. The chief authorities on whom he relies are Mr. Podmore, Dr. Mercier, Mr. Clodd, Mr. Maskelyne, Prof. Tyndall, and Prof. Ray Lankester. Fortunately, Spiritualism is, from one point of view, a branch of experimental psychology. Fresh experiments are continually verifying former ones. Mr. Mann, of course, does not touch on the experiments of Dr. Crawford, Dr. Schrenck-Notzing, or Dr. Geley, and he prefers to sum up with two *obiter dicta*. The first is his own: "A great deal more could be written to expose the folly and fraud responsible for the prevalent beliefs in Telepathy and Spiritualism; but enough has been said to convince any unbiased reader of the utter want of scientific evidence in favour of these delusions." The second is from Dr. Tyndall's "Fragments of Science," published in 1876, "Science has given us all the knowledge of the universe which we now possess, while Spiritualism has added nothing to that knowledge."

Mr. Walter Mann is a convinced materialist; in his "Science and the Soul" he proves to his own satisfaction that "Modern science knows nothing of the soul; it teaches that the mind is a product of matter, and that the higher intellectual faculties are a function of the grey matter of the brain." It is therefore quite natural that he should be impermeable to any evidence inconsistent with that fixed idea. Some day he will certainly discover that experimental psychology is also a science and that psychic phenomena are its foundation. Meanwhile he is somewhat behind the times.

HUSB FUND.—Mrs. Etta Duffus, of Penniwells, Elstree, Herts., acknowledges with thanks the following donations: Trier, £5; Mrs. Grieve, £1; Mr. Wakeford (Johannesburg), £1; A. Scott, 5s.

THROUGH THE MEDIATION OF ANGELS.

SOME MICHAELMAS REFLECTIONS.

By H. A. DALLAS.

As we approach the ancient festival of St. Michael and All Angels our thoughts turn to the consideration of its cosmic significance. The scriptures of the great religions abound in references to spiritual beings; the ancient Zoroastrians taught that everyone has an attendant spirit, to guide and help him on the path of life. The Hebrews may have acquired the idea of guardian angels by intercourse with Zoroastrians during their captivity in Chaldea, but it is hardly necessary to assume this, for the conception of the universe as peopled by spiritual beings of various kinds is one which arises readily in every thoughtful mind. It seems inconceivable that man should be the only, or highest, intelligent created being in the Universe. If we once grasp the notion of a Spirit Universe in which, indeed, the Divine Spirit is omnipresent and immanent, but in which the Divine activity is manifested through an innumerable and almost infinite number of agencies, the conception is so fascinating and seems so reasonable that it is likely to incorporate itself permanently into our mental scheme. Everyone has some sort of mental scheme of the Universe, either materialistic or spiritualistic, and the belief in angelic beings throws light upon some of the perplexities which attend any mental scheme. One of the greatest of these perplexities is involved in the existence of such ugly phases of animal life as those presented by the butcher bird, for instance, a bird which impales its prey and leaves it to die what seems to us a cruel death. Are we to regard this instinct as directly inspired by the Most High, the Spirit of Infinite Goodness?

In "The Passing of Arthur" Tennyson makes the ideal king moan in his tent:—

"O me! for why is all around me
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond
And enter it, and make it beautiful?"

Tennyson in these lines was giving expression to a view of the Universe which seemed to a student like Alfred Russel Wallace most reasonable. He held a very similar view, and expressed it in his interesting book, "The World of Life." In that work he intimates that he has been "forced to the assumption of an infinite God" by the study of the universe and the development of life and mind, but that it seems to him only logical to assume "that an almost infinite series of grades of beings" are the agents by which the infinite Being originates, develops, and controls the universe.

Wallace suggests that "the whole purport of the material universe is the development of spiritual beings who in the infinite variety of their natures—what we term their characters—shall, to some extent, reflect that infinite variety of the whole inorganic and organic worlds through which they have been developed," and he adds that if we "suppose (as we must suppose if we owe our existence to Deity) that such variety—of character—could have been produced in no other way" than that by which we see characters are actually being produced, "then we may reasonably suppose that there may have been a vast system of co-operation of such grades of being, from a very high grade of power and intelligence down to those unconscious, or almost unconscious, 'cell-souls' posited by Haeckel."

Wallace conceives that the control of the higher souls over the lower may be by some process of thought-transference and postulates "a body of what we may term organising spirits who would be charged with the duty of so influencing the myriads of cell-souls as to carry out their part of the work with accuracy and certainty." It is easy to see that if this conception is at all correct there is room for imperfection and mistakes in the product of these finite minds, and some of the facts in the universe which are so difficult to reconcile with the Perfection of God may thus be accounted for.

There are some who will shrink from this idea, because it seems to them to put God at a distance, but this is a fallacy. God is not put at a distance by the fact of human parentage, and yet in human parentage, and in many other human agencies, we recognise that His life and power are mediated to us by finite and fallible instruments. To believe in angelic agency in the production and guidance of the universe merely involves an extension of an already obvious principle. The notion that it puts a distance between God and His Universe is due to the inability of the limited human mind to conceive of Divine immanence and omnipresence. We do not really grasp the truth that "in Him we live and move and have our being," and that this applies to all beings of every grade, so that the Divine Spirit is all in all, but under limitation, and that He wills the limitations which give to these various agents the power to act and the opportunity to develop various characters in acting as His agents.

Wallace concludes that "the vast whole is therefore a manifestation of His power—perhaps His very self—but by the agency of ministering angels through many descending grades of intelligence and power" ("The World of Life," pp. 395, 396.).

This noble conception is in harmony with the cosmic significance of the Festival of St. Michael and All Angels. It has its possible dangers, of course. To some it may seem

easier to think of angels and to pray to angels than to think of God and speak to Him. So does it seem easier to a child to turn to its mother or father for food and guidance, than to God. It needs growth and effort and imagination to believe whole-heartedly in God as Spirit, inspiring all that is best in all beings, and it needs the experience of life, of sorrow, and disappointment, of failure and of death to teach us to recognise our need of the Infinite Wisdom and Love and to cease from idolatry. The essence of idolatry is the tendency to stay the imagination on the lesser agency by which God manifests, and so to forget the Eternal Cause immanent in all.

SIR OLIVER LODGE EXPLAINS.

Unauthorised, gossip paragraphs have appeared in some papers about the projected move from Edgbaston of Sir Oliver Lodge.

In answer to an inquiry, Sir Oliver empowers us to say that the reason why he determined, ultimately, not to take a house in either Hampstead or Wimbledon was not because he was "warned in a dream" against those attractive places, but because he found that he would be too accessible to interviewers and interruptions and requests for services of all kinds; he found, in fact, that the neighbourhood of London was likely to militate against the serious work which he has in contemplation, and he is therefore planning to go deeper into the country. But he further tells us that he is not likely to move this side of Christmas, possibly not till Easter, and that he has nothing more to say on the subject at present.

NATURE'S MANIFESTATION—THE SEANCE.

OLD SCOTTISH WASHERWOMAN'S RETURN.

Mr. J. Stoddart, Falkirk, writes in the "Christian Commonwealth" of the 10th instant:—

While acknowledging that he knows too little about the occult to offer an opinion regarding the value of the seance, Rev. G. Stanley Russell proceeds to give an opinion, and an opinion calculated to create a prejudice.

Not one seance in a thousand is held in darkness, and it is "weird" only in the imagination of those unacquainted with it. Personally I attend few seances, but I have always been able to recognise that it is in those very features of the seance that "culture" is so ready to disdain that we find the most profound significance.

Some years ago one of the most gifted contributors to the "Christian Commonwealth" expressed the opinion that if there was a future life it would only be for such as had formed what he called a "spiritual centre"; and Dr. L. H. Hough in the sermon published in your columns last week says the character of Jesus made it easy to believe in His resurrection. So far good. But what of the great mass of mankind who have not formed that "spiritual centre," and whose characters would make it difficult to believe in their survival? Let us be practical.

What, for example, of that poor Irish labourer in the city of Glasgow who, after a spell of unemployment during a severe winter, and after spending his last sixpence in the common lodging-house, wandered out and put an end to his trouble in the Clyde?

Or that old Scotch washer-woman with no belief in a future life, given to taking "a drop too much" and pilfering from her best friends as she had opportunity, and at the end of her hard life found dead on the washing-house floor? What gospel do we find for such as these in the philosophical deductions referred to? None. But how different when we turn to Nature's manifestation—the seance.

I have heard that Irish labourer, at a seance that was neither dark nor "weird," tell of the manner of his exit from this life, and earnestly urge his hearers "for God's sake" to try and make conditions somewhat better for the labouring man than they were while he was here.

I have heard the old washer-woman assure those who knew her here that she had found the upward path; exhort them to the practice of mutual helpfulness, remarking "Mind ye, the little kindnesses ye dae on earth are big when ye come ower here"—a sentiment very like "Whosoever shall give a cup of cold water, etc."

Is it not time the pulpit divested itself of its prejudices, and, instead of seeking to depreciate the seance, set about learning its lessons?

* Mr. Stoddart might have quoted these words written by William Howitt in 1860: "If I were to go to Lord Campbell and tell him that I knew more about the business of the Court of Chancery than he did, he would laugh at me; and if Lord Campbell came to me and said that he knew more about the phenomena of Spiritualism than I do, after years of examination, I should laugh at him; and we should both laugh on the same good grounds—at the other talking of things that he had not thoroughly sifted, to a man who had."

—EDITOR, LIGHT.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., 6, QUEEN SQUARE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, W.C.1.

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MEDIUMSHIP AND COMMON-SENSE.

Mediumship being the core and centre of all that relates to psychic evidences, we are minded to take this week a passage from Dr. W. J. Crawford's latest book, "Experiments in Psychical Science," as a subject for brief comment. The quotation is from the chapter, "Questions and Answers":—

Q. Is it the case, so far as your experience goes, that mediums are hysterical or weak-minded?

A. It is difficult to answer this by a direct affirmative or negative. Miss Goligher [the medium in the experiments of Dr. Crawford] is an extremely practical and strong-minded young woman. She is not excitable, but is placid and cheerful. As I have already mentioned, however, her mediumship has never been pressed. What might happen if she were to sit three or four times a week in promiscuous circles I would not like to say, but I think there can be little doubt she would suffer.

Some professional mediums are, I think, not exactly stable. A good many of them are excitable and given to exaggeration. A few are decidedly eccentric. I have never met one whom I would consider weak-minded, but I think, on the whole, their calling is not very suitable for them, either physically or mentally.

We have met in our time hundreds of mediums, professional and non-professional, and, as regards quality, good, bad and indifferent. Some of them, by the way, regarded with horror Spiritualism and all its works. They knew, in most cases, little or nothing about it, had heard it spoken of contemptuously, and acted on what they heard. Their own experiences, however, they regarded as something sacred and peculiar to themselves, having no connection with the detestable superstitions of others. We derived no little amusement from our observation of these persons. There were a few cases, however, with which we were inclined to sympathise. These were instances in which the mediums knew a great deal of the subject of Spiritualism and had been active in it, but had suffered so much at the hands of vampire hordes of greedy and callous phenomena-hunters and medium-baiters that they retired from the arena, broke off all association with Spiritualism, and thereafter used their gifts only rarely and in strict privacy. That, however, as we have said, is by the way. It may have some interest for students of the matter.

When we come to examine mediumship closely we see that in every case it is a question of interior sensitiveness. We have met many ruggedly healthy people, sound not only in body, but in mind, who were excellent mediums, but, of course, the sensitive spot was there, although not apparent on the surface. When harm resulted it was always through abuse of the gift. Of course there are sickly, eccentric and unbalanced people amongst mediums, but as we know of no class in the community which is exempt from the presence of people of this kind, the fact does not disconcert us in the least. Again, we remember that highly sensitive people are often disposed to react to their surroundings. Let a person of this kind have to live in the atmosphere of people who regard him, and show that they regard him, as a kind of freak, and he is bound to show some little evidence of it in his demeanour. That is a consideration that may explain, in part at least, some of the occasional eccentricities of a medium.

But the want of balance alleged against mediums as a class recoils very much on their critics, who show a tremendous want of balance in their judgments. These people, in judging mediumship, close their eyes to the mischief that comes of pursuing other avocations. They never clamoured against such things as X-rays, radium, aeroplanes—to name but three—which have demanded an infinitely heavier toll of victims—they saw that these things were worth paying for. They illustrate

the dangers of "obsessing spirits," being themselves obsessed by the spirit of bigotry.

Suppose, for the sake of argument, we admitted that mediumship was the unhealthy and unnatural thing that it is held to be by the dwindling body of its critics. Even then we should say that it is a thing we must "go through with." It is the "only way." Humanity in losing sight of its heritage, in denying its true nature, has wandered off the path, and has to be brought back again by a strong, painful and disagreeable process. Brandy is not a good thing for man as a rule. The teetotaler is even more violent in his denunciations of it than is the anti-Spiritualist in his condemnation of mediums. But if we are to believe the doctors there are cases in which brandy will restore to life and health a person who is on the brink of death from cold and exposure. We offer the argument on purely hypothetical grounds, for we do not for one moment admit that mediumship in itself is a pernicious thing. It is implanted by Nature, that wisest of mothers, it is widespread. It is not an acquired habit, a "necessary evil" or a "desperate remedy." It comes spontaneously and when wisely used is a source of blessing to its possessors and their friends.

We hear much of the philosophy of Spiritualism and it has indeed a magnificent philosophy. But in dealing with the majority of its problems we do not find the appeal to philosophy so necessary as the resort to common-sense. Philosophy, indeed, is not of much use in dealing with the ordinary matters of everyday life. Ruskin and Thoreau were philosophers. But they were both strongly opposed to railway trains, and would have kept them out of the world if they had had the power. Fortunately for us, common-sense prevailed. It will so prevail in this matter of mediumship which will in the end be found to be a great inheritance, even if at first it entails a certain amount of failure and misadventure. That is the course of all human things.

"THE SEVEN PURPOSES": A NOTABLE BOOK.

We have already referred to "The Seven Purposes," by Margaret Cameron (Harpers, 2dol.) as a book which has taken a tremendous hold on the American public, and is beginning to be known and quoted in this country.

Described by its sub-title as "An Experience in Psychic Phenomena," it deals with a series of communications through automatic writing by a cultured American lady who began, as she tells us, with the conviction that although the messages sometimes were remarkable, the assumption that they were dictated by "disembodied personalities" was "rather absurd." By "disembodied" she means, of course, disincarnate: the idea of "disembodied personalities" would be absurd to any thoughtful person, whether Spiritualist or Materialist.

The many evidential communications received by Miss Cameron, when she took up the experiments seriously, soon sufficed to change her views, and the book deals with the progression of her studies, which took her from the consideration of purely personal messages to those of an impersonal and philosophical character. These led to the reception of teachings bearing on the question of reconstruction, and the destructive and constructive "forces" operating on the life of humanity.

The teachings are given from a special point of view and involve a special terminology, but are not difficult to follow. The communications (by question and answer) are obviously the outcome of highly intelligent minds on both sides, as the critical reader will not be slow to discover. There is evidence of the influence of the late Professor James in the philosophical scheme developed, and indeed he is referred to several times and gives communications, prefaced in a particular instance by a message promising that he will visit the circle and "give a demonstration of a philosopher simplified to a force"—a characteristic touch.

In the course of his message, which deals with the misdirection of scientists in supposing that physical phenomena alone could be recognised, he observes: "Attempts to explain spiritual phenomena by physical formulae have been found unsuccessful by everyone save those who took refuge in denial of the thing that moved them to deny, the eternal and indestructible purpose."

It is in truth a notable book, abounding in instructive passages. Perhaps it is not over-bold to claim that it is one of the pioneers of a new order of spiritual teaching that shall be as clear, definite and closely related to the practical issues of daily life, as the old order was, in too many instances, cloudy and indeterminate.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

A proposal to invite Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to make a lecturing tour of Australia and New Zealand is being considered by Australian Spiritualist societies. The difficulty that has to be overcome is that of finance.

The British College of Psychic Science, which, owing to war-time conditions was forced to suspend its efforts in 1917, is now preparing to resume activities. A building in West London has been secured, and the work of the College will be under the personal supervision of J. Hewat McKenzie and Barbara McKenzie.

Miss Felicia Scatcherd, in a review of "Letters from the Other Side," in the "Christian Commonwealth," comments on the fact that the output of works dealing with after-death conditions continues rather to increase than to diminish with the ending of the Great War. "Though marked by evident sincerity," she says, "such communications vary considerably in value, and many—unfortunately, as one would say—fully justify the charge of triviality so frequently launched against writings of their class."

This charge of triviality affords Miss Scatcherd an opportunity of stating a profound truth which we welcome and gladly reproduce. "Instead of being a matter for regret," she says, "this is as it should be. One law governs the communication of knowledge on all planes. That original thinker and deep student of occult science and mystical lore, the late Franz Hartmann, was always insisting on the fact 'that higher than himself no man can think.' Emanuel Swedenborg was aware of the same truth when he said that no angel was permitted to reveal truths to a man beyond that man's own capacity for receiving such knowledge, and if this little book deals with subjects of the deepest import in adequate and noble terms, it is because the questioner was so eagerly seeking and so anxious to receive the full measure of truth that might be at the disposal of her beloved and ardent friend. 'Ask, and ye shall receive,' seems to be as true to-day as when that injunction was given by the Master." Miss Scatcherd has done good service in giving such illuminating and helpful criticism.

J. G. Swift MacNeill, M.P., writing in the "Pall Mall Gazette" about the late Lord Charles Beresford, says that on one occasion Lord Charles had a very extraordinary experience, of which Mr. MacNeill had only heard reports. "I took the liberty of asking him," says Mr. MacNeill, "to tell me the incident. He immediately replied that he was on the Chinese Station in November, 1866. He went into his cabin in broad daylight and there saw his father lying dead. The vision lasted for several seconds. He immediately recorded in writing the incident, its date, time, and place, and subsequently found that his father had died at the very moment of the vision. His strong sympathies and affections invested him with some strange telepathic faculty."

In America, as in England, there is evidently something in the nature of a revival in Spiritualistic literature. The "National Spiritualist," of Chicago, just to hand, says: "Daily newspapers are vying with monthly magazines in serving their readers with fresh and thought-creating matter bearing upon the continuity of life for all mankind beyond the grave. Bound volumes surcharged with the same vital truth are issuing with increasing frequency from the presses of our prominent publishing houses."

In further proof of the effect of Spiritualism on American current literature, we find the reviewer of the Chicago "Tribune," in discussing the new summer books, saying: "I sometimes think they are all communications from the dead. These messages or purported messages from those who have 'gone on' and the works on the probability of life beyond death confess to the stark anguish of the world. . . . The sorrow of those who have suffered loss is not easily assuaged, and the desire for some word from the Unknown Country is evidenced by this continual stream of books upon the subject of the living dead."

Mr. Edmund Gosse, in the "Sunday Times," deals with the serious difficulties in the book trade, a subject of the utmost importance to Spiritualism. After referring to the formidable rise in the cost of paper, and what he describes as the monstrous increase in the expense of binding, Mr. Gosse says, "I do not pretend to understand the causes of the present crisis, but I am able to perceive their results. Already it is very difficult to ensure the publication of important works on science and the arts."

The "Christian Commonwealth" is to be congratulated for publishing the notable letter in defence of the séance reproduced by us in this issue. We note, too, that "The Guardian," in an Editorial last month, stated that "A belief in Spiritualism is not in any way incompatible with the highest religious principles." Really it's enough to make old Spiritualists rub their eyes.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's lectures on "Death and the Hereafter" at Portsmouth on September 6th, and at Bournemouth on September 12th were overwhelming successes. At the Portsmouth Town Hall and at the Winter Gardens (the largest hall in Bournemouth) he broke all records for attendance.

A friend who was present at the Bournemouth lecture heard a stranger in the crowd that was surging to the doors say in complaining tones, as he struggled for admission, "Anyone would think it was Tetraxini." Surely a fine tribute to a Spiritualist address.

Another friend who was present writes, "Sir Arthur was in splendid form, and the applause at the end was tumultuous." The effect of the meeting at Portsmouth has been that the small local Spiritual Temple has had to give place to the Portland Hall, the largest hall in Southsea, seating 1,600 people.

Sir Arthur, in his address at Bournemouth, said it was rather a coincidence that he had been booked to speak there during the meeting of the British Association; also that he was to speak at Leicester in October during the sittings of the Church Congress. The proper place for his meeting was within the British Association. They were doing the next best thing in having it during the session of that body.

Among those occupying seats on the platform at Bournemouth were the Rev. Maurice and Irene Elliott (authors of "Angels Seen To-day") and Mr. Horace Leaf. The chair was taken by Mr. F. T. Blake, president of the local Spiritualist society.

The "W. T. Stead" Borderland Library and Bureau opened its new premises at 13a, Baker-street, on Tuesday evening last. There was a large attendance, and Mrs. Mary Gordon delivered an inspiring address. An account of the proceedings will be found elsewhere in this issue.

To the query, "What books do you re-read?" addressed by "John o' London's Weekly" to a number of well-known writers, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle replied, "I seldom re-read now. Time is so short, and literature so vast and unexplored." This reminds us of Sir Arthur's recent explanation of why he was engaged in lecturing in the country at the time when he was supposed to be taking a holiday. It was to the effect that when one reached a certain age there was no time for holidays.

A biography of the remarkable personality of Edward Wyndham Tennant, by his mother, Lady Glenconner, is (says "The Globe") to be published at the Bodley Head this week.

It appears, after all, that the servant girl at the Rectory at Swanton Novers made no confession of having caused the showers of oil and water. At least, she vehemently denies any such admission. The conjurer's explanation, strangely enough, leaves Mr. Maskelyne unsatisfied.

Abraham Lincoln has provided Mr. Francis Grierson with a fascinating subject for a study which he calls "The Practical Mystic." Mr. Grierson, who is one of the most interesting writers of our time, has been too long silent. His new book, which has an introduction by John Drinkwater, shows Abraham Lincoln in a new light. I can think of no one (says a writer in the London "Evening Standard") more capable than Mr. Grierson of writing on the subject of practical mysticism, for his own character is largely compounded of that quality.

Mr. Robert Hichens' new novel, "Mrs. Marden," described as "a romance of Spiritualism," has now run through several numbers of "Nash's Illustrated Weekly." The new weekly has met with a phenomenal success.

The story tells of Evelyn Marden, a rich and worldly woman, the death of whose son in the war stuns her with grief. Her friend, Lady Terretton, who has also lost her boy, assures her that she has communicated with him, and vainly, at first, urges Mrs. Marden to do the same with her son, Ronald. Later the sceptic is induced to meet a famous medium at Lady Terretton's house.

That Mr. Hichens is familiar to some extent with psychic things will be apparent from the words in which Lady Terretton describes what took place with regard to her son: "At the very moment of his death I seemed to see him standing beside me like a shadow, with his eyes fixed on mine. I knew he had passed over before the telegram came. But we are still together." It will be interesting to see how Mr. Hichens develops his story.

WITH THE "SPIRIT DIAMOND" CIRCLE.

By ABRAHAM WALLACE, M.D.

In *LIGHT* of the 9th ult. (p. 256) appeared a report by one of the members of the Society for the Study of Supernormal Pictures of which I have the honour to be President, and knowing the *bona fides* and scientific ability of the gentleman referred to, I became sponsor for its appearance in the columns of *LIGHT* without the name of its author. The record is one of phenomena which are apparently an evolving series of the most remarkable occurrences to be found, so far as I can discover, in the whole history of psychic investigation.

Being in Yorkshire for a short holiday, I there received a cordial invitation from the gentleman to visit his home in Northumberland to examine personally the results of the wonderful manifestations, and especially the reported productions of crystalline substances alleged to be generated by supernormal methods and under prescribed conditions.

All the instructions were received by automatic writing given through the hand of a member of the family from controlling intelligences purporting to be, among others, Michael Faraday and Sir William Crookes. I had examined photographs of the various productions, but it had been most emphatically stated by the controls that the various articles, and especially the crystalline substances—some of them being designated "spirit diamonds"—were on no consideration to be removed from the house in which they had been produced, so that anyone desirous of inspecting these must go there.

I therefore gladly accepted the invitation, so that I might be able not only to see what had already been produced, but hoping possibly to witness the further production of these crystalline products or get some supernormal pictures under my personal inspection. Unfortunately, however, the climatic conditions were said to be such, according to the automatic messages received at the time, that they could only attempt some table phenomena. We were told to hold a séance in complete darkness, using a small table, the only sitters being the gentleman, his son and myself. Immediately on the electric light being extinguished percussion sounds were heard and vibrations felt on the table, which had a small round top and a central pedestal terminating in three feet. Questions were promptly answered, the answers being spelt out in the usual way by rapping at the letter wanted while one of the sitters repeated the alphabet.

The principal communicator purported to be the gentleman's son who passed away in France during aviation action in 1916. I greatly appreciated the reception given me by the "passed on" member of the family, for, having used a formal method of address, a message was quickly spelt out: "Call me 'Crow'"—the pet name given to him by his family and friends. During the course of the séance the raps changed in character, being firmer and louder, the communicator purporting to be Sir William Crookes, and very faint sounds were also given, said to be by Mrs. Susanna Harris's "Harmony."

Here let me interpolate what apparently corroborates these statements. Two days after my return to town Mrs. Harris, who had not, so far as I can discover, known of my visit to the north, telephoned to ask if I had returned, as she said "Harmony" had, at a séance held in the previous week in London, stated that she had been at the gentleman's house in the north of England and "had communicated with Dr. Wallace," and that "Sir William Crookes was also there."

During the sitting the others saw "tongues of fire" over my head, but I could not see anything.

The table was once carried high above our heads, and I was pulled up with considerable force from my seat so that I stood on tiptoe. There was a verbal request for "Crow" to repeat something done an evening or two before, when suddenly at some distance off we heard a sharp bang which sounded like the palms of the hands being quickly slapped together. Once during the séance, feeling a slight irritation of the scalp, I asked the control to excuse me removing a hand from the table. I had just done so when the table was immediately turned upside down and one of the feet gently rubbed my scalp on the very place I had just scratched. I then asked if my shirt front could be touched—a very small area was uncovered—when immediately the table was again reversed and gentle taps were made on the couple of square inches exposed above my vest.

I suggested to the experimenters on both sides that they ought to have a small red light in the room rather than complete darkness, as such results as those obtained were much more evidential in light. Had I harboured any lingering suspicion—which, fortunately, never existed—that I was being tricked, consciously or unconsciously, by my companions making the raps and operating the table, I had an experience towards the end of our séance which would have satisfied any sceptic. Suddenly the father and son said the table has been taken away, but I retained my hands on it while it was carried out of their reach to my right side beyond the circle to the floor behind my chair; while there, with only my right hand on it, I asked questions and received answers by gentle raps, the vibrations being distinctly felt. Thus

ended a most interesting table séance indicating the existence of psychic and physical energy behind the phenomena.

The next evening, the conditions for electrical or photographic phenomena being still unsatisfactory, another table séance was held with all the members of the family, seven sitters being around a larger table, with somewhat similar results to those obtained the previous evening, special attention being given to two members who had not been at home for many months who arrived in the afternoon.

The gentleman is not only an excellent investigator but is a perfect recorder. Careful notes of every séance are kept, the questions put and the answers by automatic script being systematically tabulated.

I went over several volumes of these, and spent many hours examining the "photographs" obtained by supernormal methods (*vide* Section IV., p. 256) and the various substances referred to in Sections V., VI., and VII. My first impression of the crystalline substances was that they were probably "apports" rather than productions by supernormal electro-chemical processes. I examined the various articles by the microscope, using transmitted light, dark-ground illumination and polarised light. Although I have had a fair experience in microscopic work, it was impossible for me to make any approximate guess as to the origin or nature of the "materialised fabric." There was also a peculiar looking object said to be of animal origin which resembled some forms of larvæ. The crystalline products are beautiful objects under the microscope. These have been carefully examined by an expert chemist, and some of them behave in all respects as do natural diamonds.

I may say that during several hours while I was examining the various productions in the gentleman's laboratory, quite a running fire of delicate raps was heard on the door and several articles of furniture. This, he said, was an entirely new phase of the physical phenomena, and was ascribed to the supplementary aid derived from my presence.

I have no doubt that a full report of the whole series of phenomena, with illustrations, will at a future date be published by the gentleman, but meanwhile I am justified, for certain reasons, in withholding his name. I may have an opportunity of witnessing some subsequent experiments, but I must now tender to him and his family my best thanks for the privileges already enjoyed.

DEATH—THE INSTRUMENT OF PROGRESS.

[The following passage in a book by Dr. J. Maxwell, which he kindly sent to me in 1911, seems to express so finely the lesson which the Great War has indelibly stamped upon our minds, that I venture to ask the Editor of *LIGHT* to print it for the benefit of his readers.—H. A. DALLAS.]

In order that those members of the social body still capable of regenerating Europe may have the necessary energy they must have recourse to the true sources of force and activity, to the spiritual powers which direct universal evolution, that is to say to the Ideal, to comprehend the meaning of life, to understand the value of courage, of effort and of sacrifice. Science, art, culture, all the things that beautify human work are also the springs of evolution towards a better future, towards a more perfect life. . . . In seeking the amelioration of life, however, we must not make life itself our object; we must regard it as a means, as a condition of no value in itself, but which has value on account of the opportunities it offers for the progress of the spirit. The value of life is relative, and its value is in many cases inferior to death. . . . The races which desire to survive must sacrifice individuals, and individuals must learn to sacrifice themselves if their death is more useful than their life.

The future will doubtless belong to those who have the consciousness of individual continuity and of the solidarity of races, for they will have grasped the mystery of evolution: life does not produce sudden changes in modes of universal existence, and in the psychic sphere energy is not lost any more than it is in the physical. Mind is not inferior to Matter, which it dominates and transforms.

Death is the necessary agent for the modifications of life, the instrument of progress, the condition for future perfection; without death the individual would be perpetually fettered to inferior forms; death alone has the power to deliver from this servitude.

For the living being, the powerful source of energy, death does not signify destruction but transformation; it should not alarm or discourage us; if there are apparent reasons which make life worth living, there are also realities which are still more worthy that we should die for them.

—*"Psychologie Sociale Contemporaine"* (pp. 355, 356).

THE CIRCLE OF GOD'S WAY.—Prayer is the golden wedding-ring between ourselves and God. For myself, I divide it into two halves—the one petitioning, the other offering. Of petitioning I would say that this is the work of the soul; and of offering, that it is the pleasure of the soul. . . . This is the circle of His way with us. First is prayer; then love; and after love, humility. With humility comes grace; and after grace, temptation, and in temptation we quickly enter prayer again.—*"THE GOLDEN FOUNTAIN."*

VINDICATION OF MRS. A. BRITTAI.

AN EVIDENTIAL SITTING.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle writes under date of the 7th inst. :—

Some time ago the journal "Truth," having acquired the information from me, published in what I consider to have been a very dishonourable way the fact that Mrs. B., whose remarkable clairvoyant results I had described, was Mrs. Brittain. She has been subjected to much annoyance and misrepresentation by that journal, which was totally ignorant of the remarkable series of cases upon which my opinion was formed. It would be well, therefore, to make public a recent example of this medium's power, which will show not only how false it is to maintain that her results are from fraud, but also that the overworked theory of telepathy is unable to meet the case. Mr. Hutcheson, of Aberdeen, with a courage which is too often wanting, has allowed me to publish a letter written originally for my own eyes only.

The following is the letter to which Sir Arthur refers :—

SIR A. C. DOYLE, DEAR SIR,—I desire to thank you for giving me the address of Mrs. Brittain, and in return I give you an interview that my wife and I had with that lady.

We called upon her, without previous appointment, on Monday, August 11th, at 4 p.m. She gave an extraordinarily accurate description of our eldest son, who was a lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, and who died in Boulogne from wounds. In physical form and character we could readily recognise the lad, and her mention of several facts of his home life was very evidential. I asked Mrs. Brittain if she could get his name, and without the slightest hesitation she gave us his Christian name. I asked if friends were with him, and he stated through the medium that both grandfathers and two uncles were present, giving their Christian names.

Most amazing was the fact that the names of two lads who were classmates of his at school and who had been killed in the war were also given. He further desired us to inform the lady next door to us, who had a son missing, that her son was with him; and the name of the young man was given. Mrs. Brittain said my son was giving her a message that B— was correct in telling his mother he believed his brother was dead. We did not comprehend this very well, as that lad was still, we knew, in the army abroad. But when we returned to Aberdeen we were astonished to find that B— had returned from the East, and had given expression to that belief. The young man referred to has been missing since April, 1918.

Our second son, also a lieutenant in the Air Force, killed in October, 1918, was revealed to us, giving his name, and adding loving messages to his little sister (naming her, and also giving an aunt's name, and that of a lady friend).

When I asked if he had ever been to our home in Aberdeen since his death, he stated that he was there soon after, and was frequently there with his brother. "Give evidence," I said, and my wife and I were astonished when he informed us of an enlarged photograph of himself, and described a slight defect in the photograph. Now, this enlargement had never been seen by our second son, as it was not in the home until six months after he had been killed. He also communicated the name of the observer in his machine, who was also killed—a Willesden lad.

The name of a young lady, who was a member of my church choir, and died about twelve years ago, was also given.

Telepathy! We cannot accept that, because evidence was given of what was not in our minds. We believe our boys were with us, and are often with us. We had a real communion with them, talking, through Mrs. Brittain, in as natural a manner as though they were present in actual form. And what are we to say about those beautiful messages of hope and courage and comfort which were given, except that we felt very near the gates of Heaven, and that our lives were brightened and gladdened?

I do wonder what the Bishop of London or Rev. F. B. Meyer (see what he said in a recent "Sunday Chronicle") would have to say to evidence like this. Instead of drawing us from religion, it is knitting us more to the facts of a risen Christ, and His compassion for sorrowing humanity in allowing these revelations and messages to be sent.—Yours faithfully, J. HUTCHESON, 114, Osborne Place, Aberdeen, August 25th, 1919.

JOHNSON ON POPULAR JUDGMENTS.—In Boswell's "Life of Johnson," the Scottish biographer records that while in Staffordshire he had been informed of an earthquake, "of which, it seems, the shock had been felt in some degree at Ashbourne." On his mentioning the subject to Johnson, the "great sage" offered the following comment: "Sir, it will be much exaggerated in popular talk; for, in the first place, the common people do not accurately adapt their thoughts to the objects; nor, secondly, do they accurately adapt their words to their thoughts; they do not mean to lie, but, taking no pains to be exact, they give you very false accounts." The judicious observer of psychic experiments will appreciate the justice of this verdict. It applies even more to the popular criticisms than to the popular advocacy of the subject.

THE "STEAD BUREAU'S" NEW HOME.

SPEECH BY MISS ESTELLE STEAD.

"The most important thing in the whole range of the possible achievements of mortal man." This was the impressive statement conveyed to the late Mr. W. T. Stead by Miss Julia Ames, expressing the value of establishing communication between this world and the next.

Mr. Stead was of the same opinion, and with the active co-operation of his friend on the other side, Julia's Bureau was formed. It was opened on April 24th, 1909, with Mowbray House as its London office, and Cambridge House, Wimbledon, as its "Inner Sanctuary."

On Tuesday last, Mr. Stead's daughter, Miss Estelle Stead, presided at the opening ceremony at the new premises, 13A, Baker-street, of the "W. T. Stead" Borderland Library and Bureau, as it is now termed. There was a large gathering of friends, and a very joyous atmosphere marked the proceedings.

Miss Stead, who was greeted with applause, said :—

"We are met to-night, my friends, in a home that is our very own, and we feel that we have made a big stride. Soon I hope to see the building filled to overflowing, though at present it is just about the size we want. I do not need to tell you that my father is with us to-night. I know it, and you know it. He is overwhelmed with joy at our progress. I feel that I would like to read to you what Julia wrote through his hand in 1893. It was this :—

"I want to ask if you can help me at all in a matter in which I am much interested. I have long wanted to establish a place where those who have passed over could communicate with the loved ones left behind. At present the world is full of spirits longing to speak to those from whom they have been parted. . . . It is a strange spectacle. On your side, souls full of anguish for bereavement; on this side, souls full of sadness because they cannot communicate with those whom they love. . . . What is wanted is a bureau of communication between the two sides. Could you not establish some such sort of office?"

"It was in response to that irresistible appeal that my father decided to establish Julia's Bureau, though he was not able to carry out his wish until a later date. You all know how his idea has grown and what it has been able to accomplish. I have no fear about the future at all. They say we should attempt great things, and that is what we have done. I look forward with joy and enthusiasm, and at the same time with firm assurance to the rich and fruitful work before us." (Loud applause.)

Mrs. Mary Gordon delivered an interesting and thoughtful address, taking for her theme the Bridge Between Two Worlds. Afterwards she gave some successful clairvoyant delineations.

The new premises are larger than those formerly occupied by the Bureau. They include:

A library and reading room;

A Silence Room;

A little Temple of Peace, dedicated in love to those who have passed on owing to the Great War, where members can retire for meditation and communion;

Two Reception Rooms which can be thrown into one for meetings and At Homes, or used separately for classes;

A Restaurant where members can obtain light refreshments for themselves and their friends.

THE ASTRAL BOGEY.

There has been dissension in the enemy camp at Brighton. A Dr. Griggs was announced to lecture in the Hove Town Hall on the 2nd inst. on the dangers of Spiritualism, but one of his hearers, who expected that the lecturer would expose the false teaching connected with our cult, was bitterly disappointed. He wrote to the "Brighton Herald" that, finding Dr. Griggs was propounding "blatant and unabashed Spiritualism," he got up and left in disgust. An Editorial footnote is appended to the letter, informing the writer that if he had only endured till the end he would have found that at the expiration of an hour and twenty minutes (the lecture lasted a couple of hours) Dr. Griggs did commence to advance as many as sixty-three arguments against the practice of Spiritualistic observances.

Two or three of Dr. Griggs' sixty-odd objections to Spiritualism have a familiar sound. Spiritualistic mediums, it appears, are controlled by astrals, and the astral plane being ruled by Satan and peopled by unclean spirits ought to be left severely alone. Moreover, Spiritualism produces physical and mental debility and other harmful effects.

Regarding these dreadful charges another correspondent of the "Herald" remarks that Dr. Griggs taught Spiritualism in Brighton for years, and, judging by his appearance, seems to have survived its debilitating influence pretty well!

THE surprising thing is not that some Christians see and hear saints and angels, but that all do not share the experience. Is it not the essence of unwisdom for one Christian to make the dimness of his own sight the standard and compass of another's vision? — "Angels Seen To-day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT AND IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

BY HORACE LEAF.

(Continued from page 290.)

George Borrow's natural love of animals enabled him to note many curious incidents that led him to a firm belief that certain individuals possess an inherent power or fascination over certain creatures. Otherwise, he says, he would have been unable to account for many feats which he had witnessed and borne a share in, connected with the taming of brutes and reptiles.

"I have known," he says, "a savage and vicious mare, whose stall it was dangerous to approach, even when bearing provender, welcome, nevertheless, with every appearance of pleasure, an uncouth, wiry-headed man, with a frightfully seamed face and an iron hook supplying the place of his right arm, one whom the animal had never seen before, playfully bite his hair and cover his face with gentle and endearing kisses; and I have already stated how a viper would permit, without resentment, one child to take it up in his hand, whilst it showed its dislike to the approach of another by the fiercest hissings. Philosophy can explain many strange things, but there are some which are a far pitch above her, and this is one."

Both in Ireland and Spain, Borrow witnessed the magical effects certain words had upon horses and donkeys. In Spain the Gypsies found the use of this gift highly profitable, to the great cost of their customers; the Gypsy owner of an animal that was up for sale had merely to whisper in its ear for it to become most tractable, show its best paces, and go far to prove the truth of its master's assertion that a better beast was not to be found in the country. But no sooner was the deal finished and the money in the safe keeping of the Gypsy, who would immediately make himself scarce, than the customer would find himself the possessor of a brute that either would not go, or went in such a manner as to make him wish it would stop. The brute would play such pranks that its new owner had but one desire—to sell it again at any price. A confederate of the Gypsy would then offer a ridiculously low price for the animal on the ground of its many defects, and in the end the nonplussed and deceived purchaser would depart a wiser and poorer man.

It was in Ireland, when quite a lad, that Borrow first witnessed the exercise of this peculiar power. A splendid cob he had been riding had cast a shoe. In a village near by he found a blacksmith, "a wild, grimy figure of a man," who shod the beast so badly as to leave it plunging and tearing in a state of high excitement. A show of affection on Borrow's part was readily responded to by the animal, which whinnied and attempted to touch his face with its nose.

"Are you afraid of that beast?" said the smith, showing his fang. "Arrah, it's vicious that he looks!"

"It's at you then! I don't fear him," and thereupon I passed under the horse, between his hind legs.

"And is that all you can do, agra?" said the smith.

"No," said I, "I can ride him."

"Ye can ride him and what else, agra?"

"I can leap him over a six foot wall," said I.

"Over a wall, and what more, agra?"

"Nothing more," said I. "What more would you have?"

"Can you do this, agra?" said the smith; and he uttered a word which I had never heard before, in a sharp, pungent tone. The effect upon myself was somewhat extraordinary, a strange thrill ran through me; but with regard to the cob it was terrible, the animal forthwith became like one mad, and reared and kicked with the utmost desperation.

The animal was now so vicious that Borrow saw that merely to approach it would be dangerous. To touch it would mean death. On the man uttering another word in a voice singularly modified, sweet, and almost plaintive, an effect was produced as instantaneous and wonderful as that previously brought about. "The animal lost all its fury, and became at once calm and gentle." Borrow himself became able to act upon horses in a similar manner, and attributed the effects entirely to the tone in which the words were uttered.

In childhood Borrow appears to have been able to exert a peculiar influence over vipers. He once picked up a viper, not knowing its dangerous nature, and the reptile did not so much as move; the mere approach of his brother caused it to raise its head menacingly, hissing, not at Borrow, but at his brother. In Spain he cowed an immense dog, which bounded to attack him, by stooping till his chin touched his knee, and looking him full in the eyes. As usual, he endeavours to find a normal explanation for this by stating his conviction that no large and fierce dog or animal of any kind, with the exception of the bull, which shuts its eyes and rushes blindly forward, will venture to attack an individual who confronts it with a firm and motionless countenance.

The study of humanity assured George Borrow that the face was a thoroughly reliable guide to the disposition and character of a person. Nor does he seem to have been personally mistaken in this respect. All through his adventures

in Portugal and Spain, when distributing the Bible, he had to rely upon his judgment of persons for his personal security. The fact that he appears at no time to have been seriously mistaken in his opinion of anyone of importance to him, speaks for the accuracy of his method.

The eye has been rightly called "the window of the soul." Certainly no part of the human physiognomy so readily reveals the passions, emotions, and intelligence of anyone. Borrow has a good deal to say about the eye, and points out that everywhere the eye of the Gypsy is his most characteristic feature. It never alters. Should his hair and complexion become as fair as those of the Swede and his jockey gait as grave and ceremonious as that of an aristocratic native of Spain, were he to dress like a king, a priest, or a warrior, the Gypsy would still be detected by his eye. This organ frequently has racial peculiarities. Borrow tells us that in the Jew the feature is peculiarly small, in the Chinese oblong; but the Gypsy's eye differs from that of most people by "a strange staring expression, which to be understood must be seen, and in a thin glaze, which steals over it when in repose, and seems to emit a phosphoric light."

Perhaps this is the reason why to these people has been attributed that bane of the superstitious, the "evil eye." Borrow found belief in the evil eye very prevalent among the Spaniards; but the fact is no country has ever been without it. In Gypsy language the term for casting the evil eye also means "making sick," and is supposed to be more effective against children than adults. After receiving the evil glance, the person was supposed to fall desperately ill, and even die. No rational explanation was ever afforded by the Gypsies to show how the power was brought into operation. That certain persons exercise it, however, seems not to have been doubted by the Gypsies, Spaniards, Jews and Moors. Among the Jews and Moors Borrow found the belief very strong. It was even held that the spell might be wrought unintentionally. The evil eye might be cast by an ugly or ill-favoured person, "either designedly or not," and the same effect might be produced by an inadvertent word.

There can be little doubt that most, if not all, of the ill effects resulting from the evil eye are due to self-suggestion. A belief in its power would therefore be essential to any ill consequences, as the firmer that belief the more likely and dire would be the effect.

(To be continued.)

THE DESIRE TO RETURN TO EARTH.

Mr. R. H. Greaves writes:—

I had just finished the reading of "The Riddle of Life," by Annie Besant, "The Blavatsky Lecture," by E. L. Gardner, and "Reincarnation, the Hope of the World," by Irving S. Cooper, all brought to me by an earnest lady who calls herself a theosophist and intended them for my edification, when *LIGHT* of the 6th inst., with its article on "Fallacies of Reincarnation," by "King's Counsel," came to me as a most welcome change.

I heartily approve of all he has written; and yet I have been convinced that some of us have lived before, by the statements of able souls in the Soul-World—who also agree with all that "King's Counsel" has written in answer to Mrs. de Crespigny's article, but who deny absolutely that "a desire to return to earth is never entertained."

If ever a doctrine suffered from the foolishness of the majority of those who accept it as true, reincarnation has so suffered, and so has the belief in cause and effect that some affectedly call the law of "karma." I have not yet come across a rational presentation of either of these doctrines, written by any of those who vaingloriously call themselves "theosophists," and have given up the hope of finding one. All of them seem to be obsessed with the notion that their own individual souls are of such immense importance that the Infinite will drag them (or rather has already dragged them—for most of them think themselves to be near the end of their evolution towards perfection) through hundreds, if not thousands, of incarnations; and all in order to teach them—what? Apparently far, far less than the simplest believer in the Gospel of the Christ (if he be truly a believer) learns in far less than one brief incarnation! "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Why, then, do my friends and instructors insist that they themselves lived more earth-lives than one, and that many others have longed for and attained reincarnation? If they be worthy, it has been for no other reason than that they loved their fellows and wished to live again on earth that they might bring to us some great benefit. That is quite enough; and it is the only possible reason for the desire that is not a selfish, and therefore an evil one, for those who may seem to need to be reincarnated are not likely to desire it at all. There are readers of *LIGHT*, who are not unknown to me, who will themselves desire to return if they come to believe that they could thus do more to further the noble work in which they are already engaged; for he who is unselfish here will be unselfish hereafter and not less willing to make great sacrifice.

There are ills for which the only remedy is to forget them.

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

These notices are confined to announcements of meetings on the coming Sunday, with the addition only of other engagements in the same week. They are charged at the rate of 1s. for two lines (including the name of the society) and 6d. for every additional line.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. — 6.30, Mr. T. Olman Todd. September 28th, Dr. W. J. Vanstone.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2 — 11, Mr. Ernest Meads; 6.30, Mrs. Worthington. Wednesday, September 24th, 7.30, Mr. Horace Leaf.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E. — 11, Mr. R. Boddington; 6.30, London Union speakers.

Walthamstow. — 342, Hoe-street. — 7, Mr. Thompson address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush. — 73, Becklow-road. — 11, public circle; 7, Miss Rotherham. Thursday, 8, public meeting.

Croydon. — 117b, High-street. — 11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mr. George Prior.

Kingston-on-Thames. — Bishop's Hall, Thames-street. — 6.30, Mr. A. J. Maskell, address and clairvoyance.

Lewisham. — The Priory, High-street. — 6.30, Mrs. E. Neville.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway. — 6.30, Miss Violet Burton. Wednesday, 7.30, Mrs. Brownjohn.

Peckham. — Lausanne-road. — 7, Mrs. Podmore. Thursday, 8.15, Mr. Percy Street.

Battersea. — 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction. — 11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Pulham, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton. — Athenæum Hall. — 11.15 and 7, Mr. E. Oaten, President, S.N.U., address and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting.

Woolwich and Plumstead. — 1, Villas-rd, Plumstead. — 7, Mrs. A. Boddington (harvest festival), address and clairvoyance. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. A. Jamrach, address and clairvoyance.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood. — Old Steine Hall. — 11.30 and 7, also Monday, 7.15, addresses and clairvoyance, Mrs. Marriott. Tuesday, 3 p.m., public circle. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance. Friday, 7.30, members' social. Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week Miss Butcher.

Holloway. — Grovedale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station). — To-day (20th), ladies in attendance, 8 p.m., to receive thankoffering of fruit, vegetables, plants, etc., and assist in decoration for harvest festival. — Sunday, 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mr. P. Scholey. Wednesday, 8, Mrs. Annie Brittain. 28th, 11, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Pulham; 7, Mrs. Annie Boddington. Wednesday, October 1st, Mrs. Crowder.

INTERNATIONAL HOME CIRCLE FEDERATION. — The Executive Council has fixed October 3rd for the General Meeting of members, at which Articles and Rules defining the objects and regulating the conduct of the Federation drawn up by the Committee will be presented for adoption. A full statement will also be made as to the circumstances connected with the separation of the Founder from the original Society.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road		7-0
Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill	11-0	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway		7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earlham Hall, Earlham Grove		7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amhurst Road		7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone		6-30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street		6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street		6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road		6-30
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THE CONDUCT OF CIRCLES.

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ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment. If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct sances, and what to expect. There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament and preferably of the female sex, the rest of a more positive type. Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestation. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential, and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such a trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful sance.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over, but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let someone take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated, at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restriction on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer.

Lastly, try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

The cultivation of the will is so much a part of the direction of life nowadays that the following from "The Psychology of Behaviour," by Dr. Elizabeth Severn is worth quoting. Dr. Severn, by the way, was in London a few years ago and did much good work in psychotherapy, as recorded in these pages. In the course of a chapter on the Will, in the book mentioned, Dr. Severn writes:—

My first prescription for a strong will is an independent and self-confident attitude as being the best means to lift us out of the group consciousness or race thought into one of our own making. We are too much influenced by outside things—especially by our family, friends, the community and nation. We do not know what we think or what we want, because our habit has been to move only in established directions. The paths in the brain are mostly deep ruts worn there by long use sustained by reverence for custom and tradition.

In a word, we are too much the slaves of our heredity and environment.

* * * *

Proceeding, Dr. Elizabeth Severn points out, as an instance, that to ask the average person what he really wants is to throw him into a state of confusion in which he flounders indefinitely before he is able to catch a thread that will hold him. Everyone is desirous of bettering his condition, but is unable, as a rule, to define clearly what he needs. Now, this cloudiness of mind is an evidence that the will is not strong:—

Will to be effective must therefore be *positive, concentrated and unified*. The force of it is dependent upon the intensity of the desire behind it, and the elimination, or subjection at least, of every other conflicting desire. It is remarkable that so many people are unable to co-ordinate their various desires enough to centralise them into one general purpose. . . . Many persons with the finest natural equipment are hopelessly weakened by an inability to throw into one steady stream their various impulses and purposes. . . . Where so many fail is that the force of their will is diffused over innumerable interests until its entire potentiality is dispersed and lost.

These are at least useful hints.

* * * *

In the course of an article, "The Language of the Prophets" in the July "Quest," Professor Maurice A. Canney, of the University of Manchester, offers some observations which should be useful to those who study psychic states. Thus he writes:—

The inspiration and the ecstatic state of a prophet may be compared to some extent with the exaltation and emotion of more ordinary persons when they are profoundly and religiously stirred. Persons who have been "converted" suddenly, as we know from the study of religious experiences, are apt to behave in a strange manner and to speak in a way that is not usual with them. Very often

they use language which is either incoherent or unintelligible. It would seem that a person who has had some such experience as that known as "conversion," having changed his consciousness, finds it difficult to express this change in ordinary terms. Human language is not adequate to express the new state of mind and feeling. This, added to a state of excitement in which the ordinary control of speech is absent, produces hurried and incoherent utterances. In a manner somewhat analogous, we may suppose, the prophet is stirred to such an extent that his speech does not flow in the ordinary premeditated and measured style.

The Professor is dealing mainly with Biblical prophets and the famous mystics, but, as we are beginning to realise, there is a general unity of experience in what we classify as the occult, the mystical and the psychical—they represent varying grades and forms of extra-mundane expression. We need to be very catholic in these matters, to exercise imagination and tolerance, however strong our prepossessions may be in favour of clear and definite teachings.

* * * *

Reflecting on these questions of inspired deliverances, we begin to understand the saying that the things of the Spirit are to the children of this world foolishness. We have carefully to discriminate between mere meaningless jargon and those utterances which seem to be the product of another order of intelligence, however much it may sound like what the poet described as a divine madness. As Professor Canney remarks:—

The language in which a divine message is conveyed is not the language of ordinary human speech, but, in the first instance, the language of the soul or spirit. It is a language that is not translated easily and quickly into any human tongue. Thus the effort to express in words something almost inexpressible, something felt rather than thought, produces often words and sentences that are not to be judged by the ordinary canons of speech. The gold of divine inspiration is there, but it pours forth mingled in a peculiar way with the dross of human thought and expression.

For some years past there has been going on a re-statement in plain speech of much of that mystical wisdom of the past which could not be understood of the people. The gold is being extracted and the dross rejected—would that in some cases the task had been boldly undertaken long since!—and we are gaining the results in pure and profitable form. But there are still rich mines to be quarried. The modern interest in mysticism is significant of the recognition of a spiritual reality behind much that seems not only obscure but forbidding in the deliverances of the world's mystics, prophets and seers.

A BUREAU FOR INQUIRERS.

To meet the present great demand for information on matters relating to Spiritualism, there has been established in connection with the London Spiritualist Alliance an Inquiry Bureau, of which Mr. Percy R. Street has kindly consented to take charge as Honorary Director. Mr. Street attends at the offices of the Alliance, 6, Queen Square, on Tuesday afternoons from three to four, and on Friday evenings from five to seven, to meet inquirers and give them information and advice.

THE argument that we neither see nor hear the angels, nor are able to form any conception of what they are like, might prove to be destructive but for this fact: It is not so. Angels are seen and heard and spoken to by an ever-increasing number of Christian men and women, who have a lively faith in the doctrine of angels and the Communion of Saints.—"Angels Seen To-Day," by G. MAURICE ELLIOTT AND IRENE HALLAM ELLIOTT.

GEORGE BORROW AND THE OCCULT.

BY HORACE LEAF.

(Continued from p. 304.)

The surest evidence of the self-suggestive nature of the power of the evil eye is found, perhaps, in the means adopted to cure its bad effects. "When one falls sick of the evil eye," says Borrow (explaining the belief of an Eastern people who taught that, "For one person who dies of sickness, there are ten who die by the evil eye") "he must instantly call in to his assistance the man cunning in such cases. The man, on coming, takes either a girdle or a handkerchief from off his own person, and ties a knot at either end, then he measures three spans with his left hand, and at the end of these three he fastens a knot and folds it three times round his head, pronouncing this *barraka* or blessing: 'Ben porat Josef, ben porat ali ain' ('Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well'); he then recommences measuring the girdle or handkerchief, and if he finds three spans and a half, instead of the three which he formerly measured, he is enabled to tell the name of the person who cast the evil eye, whether male or female."

Having discovered the culprit by means of this magical process, the mother, wife, or sister of the sufferer walks forth pronouncing the name of the latter with a loud voice, and making her way to the house of the guilty person, takes a little earth from before the front door of the house, and a little from before the door of his or her sleeping apartment. Some of the saliva of the culprit is then demanded, which must be given in the morning before breakfast; then the mother, wife, or sister goes to the oven and takes from thence seven burning coals, which are slaked in water from the bath in which the women bathe. The four ingredients, earth, saliva, coal and water, are then mixed together in a dish, and the patient is made to take three sips, and what remains is taken to a private place and buried, the person who buries it having to make three paces backwards, exclaiming, "May the evil eye be buried beneath the earth." There are variations of this strange formula, but all have the same marks of mystic inspiration, as shown in the inclusion of the sacred numbers three and seven. Every step in the procedure is calculated to emphasise upon the sufferer the need and possibility of a cure; and it is reasonable to suppose that the mind capable of invoking the evil effects upon itself, can also dismiss them by the same power.

There are several incidents mentioned in Borrow's works which show him awake to the powerful effects of suggestion upon the health and actions of individuals. He was himself a subject of the habit of "touching," so characteristic of the famous Dr. Samuel Johnson. It was probably this that led him to confess in "The Romany Rye" that he had a mind, as he himself well knew, with some slight tendency to madness, and had he not employed himself, he must have gone wild. When quite a young man he admitted to an acquaintance his one-time faith in the habit of "touching." "I have touched myself in my younger days, both for the evil chance and the good. Can't say, though, that I ever trusted much in the ceremony." But the fact that he indulged in the practice at all is proof of some degree of confidence in it. The vigour with which the occult appealed to him in his own person, and the great degree of sensitiveness of his psychic nature is perhaps manifest in the difficulty he must have experienced in curing himself of this habit, and its almost overwhelming tendency to return under provocation.

In the chapters in "Lavengro" in which he gives a graphic account of the unfortunate author he met, who was obsessed with the habit of "touching," he tells how, on awakening from slumber the morning after a long conversation on the subject with this interesting personality, he felt an irresistible inclination to touch first the bed-post, then the lintel of the door; and then various other objects in turn. Only his good sense and firm will saved him from what threatened to be a return of a habit which, whilst in itself practically useless, nevertheless shows the character of the psychic deep beneath the common-sense nineteenth-century Englishman. "I felt very much inclined to touch the leaves of a flowery shrub which I saw at some distance, and had even moved two or three paces towards it; but, bethinking myself, I manfully resisted the temptation. 'Begone!' I exclaimed. 'Ye sorceries, in which I formerly trusted—begone for ever, vagaries which I had almost forgotten; good luck is not to be obtained or had averted by magic touches!'"

Two other examples of his knowledge of the power of suggestion may be cited—one in which it wrought somewhat on himself, and the other showing how cleverly and cunningly he availed himself of the faculty for the purpose of freeing a mind burdened with a thought that made the poor man's life a misery to himself and his sweet and patient wife. Borrow's moving account of the terrible fits of fear and remorse experienced by the "Welsh Preacher," Peter Williams, is a real contribution to psychology. The paroxysms of wild despair and agony of mind and soul to which this poor man was subject, because of his belief that when a child he had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, are striking examples of the dreadful effects of obsessing ideas upon sensitive temperaments. A mere phrase uttered by Borrow in apparent carelessness brought about a change in the preacher's life which his grateful wife could only

designate as "blessed." As she correctly said, it altered the current of her husband's mind, and in that way changed his views of life and the whole world from darkness to light.

The other incident is connected with a gentleman, a martyr to insomnia, who had been lent a book by a friend and informed by him that if he read it in a pleasant part of his estate he would infallibly sleep. This actually came to pass, for before finishing a page he was always in a dead slumber. He could only account for it on the supposition that the enchantment of the scene acted in co-operation with the book and brought about the desired result. Borrow solved the mystery by asking permission to glance at the book, which he found abounding in description of scenery, but on the whole commonplace, although "couched in most gentlemanly and unexceptionable language, without the slightest mixture of vulgarity, coarseness, or piebald grammar."

"Such," he says, "appeared to me to be the contents of the book; but before I could form a very clear idea of them I found myself nodding, and a surprising desire to sleep coming over me. Rousing myself, however, by a strong effort, I closed the book and returned it to the owner, assured him that the narcotic influence lay in the book, and not in the surrounding scenery, and that he might sleep wherever he cared to read it."

Borrow clearly inferred that that suggestion was sufficient to induce the condition of sleep.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE NEW REVELATION.

"Nash's" for October contains the fifth and last of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's series of articles entitled "The Vital Message." In this he takes the New Testament record and points out at some length how close is the analogy which exists between the phenomenal events associated with the early days of Christianity and those which have perplexed the world in connection with modern Spiritualism.

Concluding this part of his argument, he writes:—

"Enough has been said, perhaps, to show the reader that it is possible to put forward a view of Christ's life which would be in strict accord with the most modern psychic knowledge, and which, far from supplanting Christianity, would show the surprising accuracy of some of the details handed down to us, and would support the surprising conclusion that those very miracles which have been the stumbling block to so many truthful, earnest minds may finally offer some very cogent arguments for the truth of the whole narrative. Is this, then, a line of thought which merits the wholesale condemnations and anathemas hurled at it, not only from Rome and Canterbury, but even from Little Bethel?"

At the same time Sir Arthur would not have these remarks quoted as sustaining the literal accuracy of the New Testament record. On the contrary, he holds that it would be "a good, though an unattainable, thing that a really honest and open-minded attempt should be made to weed out from that record the obvious forgeries and interpolations which disfigure it." But it is not only revision that is needed: "a change of emphasis is also needed in order to get the grand Christian inception back into the current of reason and progress." It is still, he holds, beyond doubt that Christianity has broken down (not Christ's teaching, for that has seldom been followed) and that this breakdown has been brought home to everyone by the terrible catastrophe which has befallen the world. He sums up:—

"Is it not time, then, for the religious bodies to discourage their own bigots and sectarians and to seriously consider, if only for self-preservation, how they can get into line once more with that general level of human thought which is now far in front of them? I say that they can do more than get level—they can lead. But to do so they must have the firm courage to cut away from their own bodies all that dead tissue which is but a disfigurement and an encumbrance. They must face difficulties of reason, and adapt themselves to the demands of the human intelligence which rejects, and is right in rejecting, much which they offer. Finally, they must gather fresh strength by drawing in all the new truth and all the new power which are afforded by this new wave of inspiration which has been sent into the world by God, and which the human race, deluded and bemused by the would-be clever, has received with such perverse and obstinate incredulity. When they have done all this they will find, not only that they are leading the world with an obvious right to the leadership, but, in addition, that they have come round once more to the very teaching of that Master whom they have so long misrepresented."

The publication of "The Vital Message" in book form is expected shortly.

The future world has been somehow painted to the mind as a place of continuous praise. . . . It cannot be thus. It must be a life of activity, for happiness is dependent on activity; death is cessation of movement; life is all movement.—GENERAL GORDON.

SINGING BY MATERIALISED FORMS.

TWO WONDERFUL SEANCES IN WALES.

From a correspondent who is well known to us we have received the following account of two very remarkable materialisations at Merthyr, held with the gifted medium, Mr. Evan Powell:—

Shortly after the visit of Dr. Ellis T. Powell to Merthyr in the summer, a séance was kindly given by Mr. Evan J. Powell, the resident minister of the Merthyr Spiritualist Society, at my house, at which we had very striking phenomena in materialisation and voices. The medium was corded to the chair in which he sat by myself and a gentleman who had never attended a séance before. The latter was asked by me to take particular notice of his mode of fastening and the knots. The medium, having been secured, his thumbs were, as a final precaution, connected by a single cotton thread across the space between both hands, which rested on his knees.

Remarkable events followed the medium's passing under control. Amongst them was the appearance of my wife, who brought out from the cabinet a vase of flowers and placed it to my face, at the same time laying a hand upon my head. She did the same to my daughter who sat next to me, and called her by name. She then went across the circle to a nephew and his daughter and said to them, "Don't be afraid—it's auntie—can you see me?" Both saw her perfectly, and so did other members of the circle, and her niece, who was wearing pince-nez, felt the lace shawl that she appeared to be wearing brush her face and it caught the pince-nez and caused it to fall into her lap. The spirit's movements were followed by a light which came repeatedly close to my face, yet while others had remarked that they saw her distinctly and the drapery about her, singularly enough neither I nor my daughter saw her, and I said so. After that the light came very close to my face and I recognised her voice when she said, "Can you see me now?" I am sorry to say that I did not, nor did I when she elevated herself in the middle of the circle and asked if we all saw her. I saw the light, but neither features nor form. After that a very cold current of air passed between me and my daughter, who said she felt very cold and that something was behind her, though her chair back was within three inches of the wall.

A few seconds afterwards I felt a heavy hand upon my right shoulder, another hand grasp my left arm above the elbow, the pressure of a body forcing itself round me, and then I was drawn by much pressure against the breast of a materialised form. A voice said "Father!" and a face with moustache pressed against mine, and kissed me on the forehead and both cheeks. It was my son. He crossed the circle to his cousin, laid his hands upon his shoulders, told him not to be afraid, kissed him on the forehead and spoke humorously to his daughter and to a member of the band of his old detachment who was present.

When the control called for the light, after wishing us good-night, to my amazement the rope, except the end fastenings, was loose in the chair, and the medium lying on the floor close to the door from which the control had seemingly passed out.

I should observe that a movement of some kind was heard before the control wished us good-night, as of something passing over the heads of some of the sitters. His last words were to put up the light and look to the medium.

We went to the medium, who was still in his trance, and found the cotton strand connecting his thumbs intact as we had left it at the opening of the séance. The proof was thus given that he had been held to the chair throughout the evening until he was liberated and removed by some power other than himself.

SPIRIT DUETS.

On the 19th inst. advantage was taken of the presence of Mr. Spencer, of Glasgow, at the Temple to hold another séance. There were fifteen persons present in all, including five members of my own family. My son and son-in-law, a London journalist, were two of the members of my family and both were sceptics—but deeply interested in obtaining some undeniable evidence of the reality of the phenomena. They both received it, and their scepticism vanished.

The medium was roped by my son and son-in-law, and the single cotton thread connecting the thumbs was again resorted to.

The psychic strength of so numerous a company was apparent immediately the light was extinguished. Within half a minute bells were jingling in different parts of the room. The control sent them away and called for a prayer, which Mr. Spencer offered. Then the control greeted friends that he knew and had the names of the "sceptics" given to him—and during the sitting he rallied them repeatedly.

Phenomena developed the instant that singing began, by the entry of my grandson, killed at Mons Hamel, who went straight to his father and laid his hands upon him. Conversation ensued between them, and when the singing ceased the boy brought a vase of flowers from the cabinet, took it

to his father, then came with it and put it in my face and spoke to his "Uncle Alf" and to "Auntie," of whom he asked where his cousin E— was that night. The voice had his own soft, natural intonation, with a faint lisp, and was without a trace of the medium's.

The control then asked for another hymn, and we sang "When the mists have rolled away." No sooner was it begun than I was startled by hearing a fine baritone voice singing with us close to me. It was a lovely voice. I tried repeatedly to satisfy myself whether it was a reality or an illusion. Then this voice ceased and another, unmistakably a female voice, joined the singing, and I thought I surely must be mistaken. But while these doubts were ruminating, the male voice struck in with the female with greater force than before, and their harmony dominated the whole volume of sound from the company. Everyone wondered who were the singers. The voices were so powerful, so mellow and sweet, that I said, "Well, this is really heavenly music." Whether I was heard or not, the observation was followed by a more intense expression of this spiritual music than before. It was beautiful and astounding, and an entirely new experience to us.

When this singing had ceased I heard a clear, distinct human voice addressing my son-in-law, say, "Hello, E—, old chap," and a smart slap on his knee accompanied it. He immediately answered, "Is that you, Hugh?" "Yes," was the reply. E— replied, "I'm glad you've come, old fellow, how are you now?" To which Hugh answered, "Better than I was. I am getting entirely reconciled now." Further conversation followed. Then I asked a question, as I knew the gentleman in this life, "Was that you singing with us just now, Mr. M—?" He answered, with his native modesty, "Well, I was trying to." I said it was delightful, and I thanked him.

While this was going on we heard the voice of a lady talking to Mr. Spencer, who told her he was very pleased to meet her. At that moment the control asked us to sing again "At even, when the sun was set." The gentleman, he said, wanted to sing again, and he was a fine singer and so was the lady. The hymn was started and these two spirits joined. I never heard anything so impressive. Their united voices overpowered all the rest. It was so powerful, indeed, in the corner of the room where we three sat, that it seemed to vibrate my chair. I heard and felt the profound inspiration of the gentleman, who sang in our faces. The lady's voice was of similar power and sweetness, and though they were singing in harmony with the rest they were each perfectly distinct.

Soon afterwards the lady said, "Good-night to you all, kind friends"; the gentleman followed with the characteristic farewell, "Good night, E—" with a vocalisation as perfect and distinct as in natural life.

Following this my wife came into the circle, and I distinctly heard the forcible step of a person lame in one foot with its measured tread, at the same time the rustle of a silk dress sweeping the floor—unmistakable signs of identity. I will not take up space by detailing her doings—only to say that she brought roses from a vase on the mantelpiece for all of her own family, and touched and spoke to us. Wherever she went her light moved with her, and several say they saw her, but I did not. The control said she would have built herself up, but her grandson was so eager to get to his father that he came in with her and used up some of the power. He took a bronze figure, over three pounds in weight, from the mantel piece over to his father, and laid it in his lap.

The control now said that he feared the power was too weak for further phenomena, but he asked us to sing again, something soft. It was done, and as it finished I felt a hand take my left hand as it lay upon my knee (I was end man, as I mentioned) and put a rose into it. The spirit then gripped my hand firmly and drew me up. Then a voice spoke.

It said, "Father! Don't be excited—don't get agitated (I had spoken his name with much emotion), bear up, bear up."

He kissed me on the forehead and both cheeks, and then drew up his sister and kissed her, and afterwards crossed over to his brother and cousin and greeted them. Finally he turned to a member of the circle who had been a member of the band of his detachment and said, "Good-night, trombone."

It only remains to explain who the spiritual singers were. The gentleman was the closest personal friend of my son-in-law and held a very important confidential position in one of the largest concerns in Great Britain, manufacturing explosives. He was travelling to Scotland in an express, which met with a disastrous collision just over the border two years ago. Two soldiers on his right and left were killed outright. He appeared to be uninjured, but three weeks afterwards in his London office he suddenly collapsed, and five weeks later passed away. He was a magnificent singer, and a master of the piano.

The lady gave her name to Mr. Spencer as Emma Hardinge Britten. Of course, as Mr. Spencer had no personal acquaintance with that lady, knowing her only from her works, her identity cannot be vouched for; but we knew four out of the five visitors without possible mistake, and we may presume that Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten might in some mysterious way, familiar only to spirits, have been drawn to our circle on this occasion.

H. W. S.

London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd.,

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The Alliance possesses the largest Library in existence of occult, mystical, and psychical books. Members' annual subscription £1 1s. For prospectus, syllabus of meetings, classes, &c., apply to the Secretary.

THE REFLECTIONS OF "BOWSHOT."

(WITH APOLOGIES TO MR. J. A. SPENDER'S "BAGSHOT.")

Long ago *LIGHT* described Psychical Research as the Cinderella of the Sciences. The fairy godmother has yet to arrive. When she does it might be suggested that for the pumpkin to provide the magic coach she might select the head of any one of the learned gentlemen who write books against the subject.

There is a beautiful French motto which appears on certain old sundials, and which may thus be Englished, "When I cannot see clearly I do not speak." It has a more than playful wisdom. If it had been generally followed humanity would have been saved an almost infinite amount of misdirection from swarms of fanciful and speculative writers who discourse voluminously on things of which they have no glimmering of real knowledge.

The man who "trims" and equivocates is so much the normal man that he is strongly disposed to regard the man who speaks the truth exactly as he sees it as a doubtful, suspicious and probably "deep" customer.

Some words seem to have a hypnotising power—usually a sinister one. Popular use or misuse has charged them with a significance that never belonged to them in their origins. Consider the word "ghost." It has something so uncanny and sepulchral about it that not to believe in ghosts seems almost a healthy and virtuous attitude of mind. And yet a ghost is simply a spirit, whether an archangel or a poltergeist. "Demon" is a still more flagrant instance. It means precisely the same—a spirit. As for "Hades," that term likewise has become debased—it conjures up ideas of gloom and horror. Yet all that it denotes is an unseen world. These are the bogies that frighten a humanity still in its infancy, but more childish than childlike.

It has been stated that the words attributed to Jesus, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," are really an interpolation by some monkish scribe of the past. There is something to be said for this view. Forgeries and interpolations were not uncommon amongst the monastic scribes. The doctors of divinity occasionally "doctored" the manuscripts. And one cannot help noticing that in the phrase quoted there is a play on the name Peter (meaning a stone or rock). The old monks were fond of puns.

There is a vision which comes to the artist which, if it may not be classed as actual spiritual vision, is near akin to it in refinement, delicacy and beauty. Of such are Keats's "magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn," Henley's "shining sensitive silver of the sea," and Wordsworth's "the silence that is in the starry sky; the sleep that is among the lonely hills." These and innumerable other phrases from the great poets speak to the spirit in a tongue which, if not quite its own, it can at least understand.

Some of the most caustic comments on the anti-Spiritualist have proceeded not from Spiritualists but from those outside their ranks. Thus a well-known author remarked the other day that it seemed to him

there was nothing so calculated to convert people to Spiritualism as the criticisms of its Sadducee opponents. And I heard a famous poet say, in allusion to an attack on mediums, that the author of it, having for years tried to show his superiority to somebody, was now reduced to kicking the only class of persons who could not hit back—the despised mediums.

When I was asked once to define Professor James's philosophy of Pragmatism, I could find no better illustration than the man who was cured of blindness by Jesus. The Pharisees examined him on the question of the character and credentials of Jesus, to which the blind man could only reply that all that concerned him was that, having been blind, he could now see. That blind man was the first Pragmatist.

The greatest evils of existence are not those which are inflicted upon us by others, but those which we inflict upon ourselves. In the hells and penitential places of the spiritual world every sufferer comes at last to the knowledge that he was placed there not by the fiat of some judge or correctional court, but by his own act and deed.

It is amusing and edifying to observe how certain persons, having with consummate skill and pains reared for themselves an edifice of troubles, modestly resign all credit for their work and attribute it to the hand of Destiny.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

WINTER SESSION.

As will be seen from our advertising columns the winter session of the L.S.A. will be opened next Thursday (October 2nd) at 7.30 p.m. in the large hall attached to the rooms of the Alliance, when a social meeting accompanied by clairvoyant descriptions will be held. These occasions are always most enjoyable, and we trust that the attendance will be a large one.

It will be noted by all who have received a copy of the syllabus that evening meetings are a feature of the new session. So many of our friends, especially of the sterner sex, are unable to attend afternoon gatherings that it has been decided, while not altering the times hitherto fixed for the Tuesday sésances and the Friday trance addresses by Mrs. M. H. Wallis (3 p.m. and 4 p.m. respectively), to put on the hour of the Thursday meetings from 5 to 7.30 p.m. The first Thursday evening meeting in each month will be—like that announced above—of a social character, with clairvoyance. The others will be devoted to lectures, given alternately by Dr. W. J. Vanstone and other speakers. Dr. Vanstone will take for the topic of his opening address on October 9th, "The New Era: Its Beginnings To-day." The lecturer on the 16th will be the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis, B.A.; on the 30th Mr. Percy R. Street; and on November 20th, Dr. Ellis T. Powell. Their subjects will be announced later.

As hitherto, the Tuesday afternoon meetings for clairvoyance are confined to members only. To all other meetings associates are admitted without charge, and visitors on payment of 1/-.

Each week's fixtures will be advertised in the preceding issue of *LIGHT*.

On account of the great number of new members it is found necessary to issue tickets of membership. These tickets are, of course, non-transferable. Each ticket must be signed by its holder, and its production can alone ensure free admission to any meeting.

THE ETHERIC BODY.—Regarding the constitution of the etheric double Mr. Chester Green (Brighton, Mass., U.S.A.) sends us a long quotation from Mrs. Besant's "Man and His Bodies," which he evidently regards as an authority on the subject. She states that the Etheric Double is composed of four ethers, which interpenetrate the solid, liquid and gaseous constituents of the dense body, surrounding every particle with an etheric envelope, and thus presenting a perfect duplicate of the denser form, the physical body. It is by means of the Etheric Double that the life-force, Prana, runs along the nerves of the body and thus enables them to act as the carriers of motor force and of sensitiveness to external impacts.

FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE WINDOW.

Until Mrs. Wriedt announces her intention of receiving visitors, friends and inquirers are kindly asked to refrain from forwarding requests to see her.

Alderman Jabez Chapman, the President of the Leicester Spiritualist Society, is the Mayor-elect of Leicester.

Professor Haraldur Nielsson, of the University of Reykjavik, returned to Iceland last week after a stay of several months in England. During his visit he investigated psychic matters, and had sittings with a number of prominent mediums.

The Professor, who paid us a call before his departure, said that a slight misunderstanding had occurred in reference to Mr. Tweedale's recent statement in *LIGHT* to the effect that his book was the only one on a psychic subject in the Icelandic language. Mr. W. T. Stead's "Letters From Julia," it appears, was translated into Icelandic several years ago, and both Professor Nielsson and Mr. Einar H. Kuaran have written books and pamphlets on the subject. Mr. Tweedale's book, the Professor said, was the first to be edited and brought out under the auspices of the Icelandic Society for Psychical Research.

Louise J. Miln, in the "Sunday Chronicle," replying to a contribution from the Rev. F. S. Myers condemning Spiritualism, remarks, "I have never once attended a séance or a private sitting at which the disembodied spirits—real or fraudulent—were not 'on the side of the angels.' I have never known one to advise evil or advocate wrong."

The "Sunday Chronicle," we understand, refused the publication of certain letters from correspondents who sought to champion the cause of Spiritualism, in reply to the attack of Mr. Myers. These letters, which have been published elsewhere, are couched in unfortunate language, the writers' zeal outrunning their discretion. Such critics should learn a lesson from Mrs. Miln's contribution. It was an admirable reply to the charges made against Spiritualism, and was expressed in polite terms. The result was that the "Sunday Chronicle" printed it with a double-column heading, "Defence of Spiritualism," with a sub-heading, "A Reply to the Indictment of Fraud and Danger." The moral is obvious. We draw the attention of would-be critics to the patient, restrained and courteous reply of Sir Oliver Lodge to a medical sceptic, published in our last issue.

At the recent meeting of the British Association in Bournemouth, much interest was shown in Dr. Waller's machine for photographing thoughts and emotions. Experiments were made with men and women in the audience. One diagram represented the feelings of a Belgian woman during an air raid. She proved so good a subject that the lecturer had only to say "think of Belgium" and her emotions were reproduced by the machine. She could be happy or unhappy at command, and the machine duly recorded the degree of her happiness or the reverse.

All people take about two seconds to respond as one saw (says the "Daily Mail" report) in several rough and ready experiments with the audience. The emotions or thoughts responded to all sorts of stimuli. Sometimes the lecturer just asked a sudden question; sometimes threatened to burn the victim or passed a hand quickly over his eyes. In each case the result was duly recorded. It is remarkable that any physical movement lessened the emotion as registered by this electric machine, which responds so sensitively to the electric energy of the nervous centres and the brain.

A writer in the Philadelphia "Evening Public Ledger," after reviewing in a fair-minded way the claims of Spiritualism as given in a number of books by well-known writers on the subject, concludes, "The inquiring student can find no better summary of the whole subject than is contained in J. Arthur Hill's 'Spiritualism: Its History, Phenomena and Doctrine.'"

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is announced in our advertisement columns to lecture at Wimbledon on Sunday, October 5th. Next month he will be busily engaged in a lecturing tour. He speaks at Northampton on October 13th; at Leamington on October 14th; at Hanley, October 16th; and Worcester, October 17th. He is to visit Aberdeen on November 12th and 13th.

In his recent lecture at Southsea Sir Arthur said he had that day penned a challenge to the Rev. F. S. Myers in connection with a statement the latter had published with re-

gard to the late Dr. Forbes Winslow's views on the question of the sanity of mediums. There was, Sir Arthur declared, ample evidence to show that Dr. Forbes Winslow had entirely withdrawn from that position after closer study of the subject.

From our files we see that Dr. Forbes Winslow lectured at the Cory Hall, Cardiff, on March 21st, 1912, on "The Mind of Man—What is it?" under the auspices of the local Spiritualist society. Referring to the phenomena of dual personality, he said, "The ordinary medical man without psychic knowledge classifies all these symptoms as within the range of imbecility, and the clairaudient who hears the finer vibrations than the normal, and the clairvoyant who sees the finer vibrations, have in the past been incarcerated in asylums solely on the evidence of these symptoms, from which fate I have rescued many by refusing to certify." This is surely a strange authority for opponents of psychic matters to quote.

But here is a stiffer pill for those to swallow who seek to find support in Dr. Forbes Winslow for their reckless statements. Dr. Winslow, in a lecture he delivered at Merthyr on October 22nd, 1911, was questioned about a statement which he had made long before regarding the connection between Spiritualism and lunacy, and in reply frankly admitted that when he made it he was a young man. "He fully believed at the time that what he said was true, but since then he had had much experience in abnormal and psychical phenomena, and had completely changed his views on the subject. He now knew that what he said forty odd years before was a mistake—but it was a mistake honestly made and he as honestly admitted his error." Dr. Forbes Winslow further added that he had been the means of preventing one of the best materialising mediums from being sent to an asylum through "mistaken symptoms."

The Rev. Chas. L. Tweedale informs us that the new edition of his book, "Man's Survival After Death," is expected to be out in October.

Now that the war is over the tide of visitors to London from various parts of the world has set in. A number of Spiritualists from South Africa have called recently, some of whom, though only here for a few months, have joined the Alliance. They recognize the value of the wonderful library which is thus at their disposal, and they will be able to attend some of the interesting meetings of the coming session.

We hope that the example of Mr. Hutcheson, of Aberdeen, in allowing his name and address to be given in connection with an evidential sitting he had will be followed by others in like circumstances. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in our last issue, commented on Mr. Hutcheson showing "a courage which is too often wanting."

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten many years ago, in writing about Spiritualism in England, referred to the same subject. She said that she frequently received valuable testimony which could not be used because those communicating it insisted on withholding their names and addresses. She rightly observed, "There is no satisfaction in offering such shadowy testimony to those who are asked to believe in occurrences of an unprecedented and often startling character." The passage occurs in her great book, "Nineteenth Century Miracles."

Mrs. Maris Warrington Billings, a member of the staff of "Azoth," the American monthly magazine of occultism and mysticism, has paid us a visit. She has come to London to arrange for the publication of some of her books. Mrs. Billings, who writes automatically, has published "Cleomenes," "An Egyptian Love Spell," and other works.

She relates a curious and quaint circumstance connected with her control, who purports to have been an English peer. Through his books he has so impressed his personality on readers in America that they write to him and he replies to them through Mrs. Billings. Still more quaint is the fact that he has his own banking account made up from the sale of his books, and out of this fund he disburses sums for charity. On these lines staid England cannot hope to compete with America.

In his first séance in "Mrs. Marden"—the spiritualistic novel now running in "Nash's Illustrated Weekly"—Mr. Hichens introduces a tambourine, a concertina and a rattle, and he describes the sight of these articles as making Mrs. Marden "feel almost sick." The novelist, too, becomes melodramatic. When the lights were all turned out except one, a sitter's eyes "gleamed with light like a cat's," and the features of another sitter "resembled those of a mask modelled and painted to represent Famine." The instruments mentioned were duly played.

SPIRITUAL POWER.

ITS UNFOLDMENT AND DIRECTION.

By LILIAN WHITING.

The initiation by which one achieves the power to relate oneself to the universal energy so as largely to overcome the limitations of fatigue and of time is a very positive and not at all a merely passive matter. Spiritual receptivity is not a negative attitude. It is not holding up, languidly, an empty cup, expecting that some time and some way it will be filled without exertion on our part. Spiritual receptivity is not to be regarded as a matter of emptiness, but, rather, the condition of the very highest receptivity is that of the highest degree of spirituality. When electricity flies from the static to the dynamic, leaps across any gulf or through any obstacle, it is not because the object to which it leaps is inert, but rather because it is in a highly charged state which attracts the corresponding potency to itself. This illustration exactly portrays the condition of receiving from the atmosphere this current of infinite and irresistible energy, which enables one to achieve a vast amount of work in a very little time, and without exhaustion.

To come into this condition is a work involving the entire three-fold force of body, mind and soul. For while the spiritual inhabits a physical body, the condition of the body must affect, proportionately, the receptivity of spiritual power. The body is the temple of the indwelling spirit, and it has laws which must be obeyed. The body is the result of its range of attraction. It is constantly changing, old atoms being thrown off and new ones attracted, and because of this, one can make his body what he will. It may be gross and heavy, or it may be made light and subtle. As its only use is as the vehicle of spirit, the more light and agile and subtle it can be made, the better it fulfils that purpose.

The factors in making it light and subtle are air, water, exercise, food, and thought. Fresh, pure air is one of heaven's best gifts, and no one is less appreciated. Not merely is it enjoyed by going out of doors, but by keeping every room constantly supplied with pure, fresh, life-giving air. The cold bath on rising in the morning is—in its effects, at least—almost as much a condition of spiritual as it is of physical vigour. It may be made far more efficacious by impressing upon the subtle body the thought of the spiritual cleansing and renewal that is typified by the physical cleanliness. To direct the thought thus upon the purification of the spirit is to invest the bath with an intense current of magnetic power. The day is past when it could be considered an absurdity to stamp the impress of thought upon an external act. Let one plead, as he plunges into the cold, sparkling, invigorating water: "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults." Let him assert to himself as he emerges: "I will rise in newness of life." The bath may be thus invested with fairly magic properties, and one is made anew and made alive, and every nerve responds to a higher range of vibration. It is not necessary to be an athlete in order to take sufficient exercise for the attainment of the finer state of life. The spirit in which one takes his walks in the open air is far more important than is their length, their frequency, or their duration.

The question of food is always important, and the eating or abstaining from meat is not a merely arbitrary distinction, but is based on laws as exact as those of mathematics. Every substance has its own rate of vibration. The vibration of animal life is on a far lower scale than that of human life. It is instinct with crude passions, fears, desires, all relating themselves to a lower plane of existence. When this food, then, is taken into the human body, it sets up its own range of correspondences, and it builds up,—not the finer, the subtle and the ethereal body, but the coarser one. Food should really be taken for the subtle rather than for the physical body; that is, it should be taken of such a quality that the subtle body can appropriate the finer aroma. Food that is pure, light, wholesome, fits the body to respond, like a fine-tuned instrument, to the higher vibrations of spiritual energy. Food that is heavy and coarse unfits it to respond to this range, and thus clogs and imprisons the indwelling spirit. Once realising this principle man can determine for himself the quality and quantity of the foods that best fit him to express his higher life. There can be no arbitrary rules. Needs and powers vary with the individual, and each must, by test and experiment, determine for himself.

The human organism is a chemical laboratory of the most complex variety, and the action and reaction of food depend upon a thousand things, inclusive of both physical and mental, which cannot be decided, in any authoritative way, by one for another. More potent, however, than any one of these, and more potent than all combined, if multiplied a thousandfold, is the factor of thought. "As a man thinketh so is he." It is literally true. Thought shall determine his form, his bearing, his presence, his atmosphere. Thought shall also determine his power to command his life, rather than to accept it at the mere drift and mercy of circumstances.

"Soul's desire is means enow," says Emerson. The soul's desire should control the soul's progress. For the soul is the divine spark that remains in its high relation with the divine, and may thus be trusted. Mere desire on a lower plane has often to be denied and uprooted before progress can be made; but the soul's desire is to be held supreme.

To be able to direct our life: to recognise the forecast, and choose, and select, and combine events to the highest purpose, is a perfectly normal condition, and it is one which it is man's duty to achieve by this high and harmonious living.

MYSTERIOUS MUSIC IN A CHURCH.

The following appeared in the London "Star" of the 9th inst.:

A tale of ghostly music is told by the vicar of Avenbury Herefordshire, the Rev. Archer Shepherd.

Writing to a party of antiquaries who had made a pilgrimage to the lonely parish church of Avenbury, Mr. Shepherd, having apologised for being unable to meet them, said:

"By some strange, unexplained cause the sound as of a voluntary played on an organ is heard at times to proceed from the church. Three such occasions have come under my notice. On the first the music was heard by several members of the family of Colonel Prosser, of Bromyard, who were walking along the footbridge by the church. They all heard it, and believed it was the organist practising. They afterwards found that neither he nor anyone else had been inside the church that day.

"The American organ was replaced by the present harmonium. One Saturday afternoon when I was in the vicarage garden I heard the harmonium being played, and supposing that the woman who cleaned was allowing her child to strum the instrument I hastened to forbid it. The music continued all the time I was walking down the meadow till I came within ten yards of the churchyard. Then it ceased, and I found the church door locked and no one there.

"On another occasion I heard the music as I was driving in Avenbury-lane. It sounded like a voluntary, and continued while the pony trotted about 100 yards and ceased when I came opposite to the church."

A lady who formerly lived in the locality, writing from Leamington, says:—

"I am inclined to tell you of an experience my husband and myself had 40 years ago in this same church one Christmas night. It was snowing very fast, and we entered the porch. It was then midnight, and almost immediately we heard what at first we thought were many human voices conversing. The church seemed full of extremely happy, joyous sounds. Although we distinctly heard so many voices in the church, we could not distinguish a word they said. Naturally we tried the door of the church, but it was locked. We went outside, but the church was in darkness. The wonderful sounds came distinctly from the inside of the church, and the experience so impressed us both that the memory has never grown dim."

THE OLD AND THE NEW SPIRITUALITY.

In the September number of that excellent little magazine "Vision," Clifford Bax tilts at the still current medieval conception of spirituality, which regards the senses as the antithesis of the soul and exalts the man who abstains from this and that. We expect him to wear "the white flower of a blameless life":—

"'A blameless life!' And is that enough? Does that alone constitute spirituality? Generation by generation, we adopt the old values because we are inert, but we know now that they do not satisfy us. Our ideas have changed. We must change our ideal. We must recognise at the outset that spirituality is not exclusively a matter of morals. It comes also from a development of the psychic imagination and a culture of the senses. . . . Psychic imagination unites us with the experience of others, and, no matter how blameless we may be, if we lack this faculty we must be insulated and small. Now, since it cannot be acquired in the wilderness but only in the world, we must admit that the world may spiritualise us and that life is not an experience to be cold-shouldered. If, again, we recognise that the material world is not ignoble but reveals the vast Imagination that conceived it, we must realise that the senses are the allies and not the enemies of the soul. We must cultivate our senses and cease to be proud of our indifference to the fair things of the earth. The shape, texture, perfume and colour of the wild rose proclaim that the world's Artificer is a Poet; and if our senses bring to us no joy from such manifestations of His fancy we are by so much removed from understanding Him and therefore the less spiritual."

ERRATUM.—In the last paragraph of Mr. Hutcheson's letter on p. 303 of last week's issue, through no fault of the writer, the name of the Rev. F. B. Meyer was substituted by mistake for that of the Rev. F. S. Myers.

NATIONAL UNION FUND OF BENEVOLENCE.—The Honorary Financial Secretary, Mrs. M. A. Stair (14, North-street, Keighley, Yorks.), acknowledges with thanks the following subscriptions received in August: Mrs. Woodroff, 2/-; Mr. Dawdall's circle £1; A Friend, South Kensington, £5; A Friend, Sheffield Centre, 10/-; United Societies' Garden Party, Sheffield, per Mr. Higginbottom, £20 5/-; B.E.C. Oldham, 2/6; Total, £26 19s. 6d. The disbursements during the month amounted to £18.

FRIVOLOUS MESSAGES.

A SUGGESTED EXPLANATION.

One of the most disturbing problems, no doubt, by which the Spiritualist is confronted is the often too flagrantly frivolous nature of communications received through the trance-medium.

Any light on the subject would certainly be welcomed, and although an explanation, having for its foundation nothing more substantial than a mere theory may fail to confound the derisive attitude of the many opponents who are ever ready to pounce upon an apparently vulnerable point, it may still be useful as an indication that the particular question with which it would deal is not altogether unanswerable.

Now, I can well conceive the possibility, in the Spirit-world, of a state which, while differing in certain respects from our own "dream-life," may be the actual equivalent thereof. Herein will be found, I believe, a not altogether unsatisfactory solution of the problem.

Whereas, in dreams, earth-dwellers are at times wafted into higher spheres, those on the other side may recall therein certain episodes of their past experiences of earth-life.

When we dream, it is presumed that only certain of our mental faculties are active, and that these, unconstrained, uncontrolled by the rest—(the critical, reasoning faculties)—are allowed to wander erratically through the most absurdly impossible situations, encountering without surprise or question adventures which they would in their wakeful state immediately recognise as absolutely ridiculous. Frequently the dream thoughts of even the most intelligent, the most sedately methodical of men and women, could they be faithfully recorded, would make the most nonsensical reading.

Granted, then, that a dweller in the Spirit-world may at times lapse into this equivalent of our own dream-state, may he not recall therein past experiences of his earth-life, including even such insignificant details as the enjoyment of a cigar, or the quaffing of a favourite beverage—to quote extreme cases?

Should that spirit dreamer be brought *en rapport* with an entranced medium, is it not rational to suggest that these apparently irrelevant thoughts, these dream-ramblings, may be impressed upon her mind and duly included in her "communications"?

I fully believe that the existence in the Spirit-world of this dream state would account for many not yet satisfactorily explained phenomena. The spirit dreamer, rehearsing, reconstructing, for example, some episode of his earth-life, would probably include in his dream certain details of his personal appearance, of the fashion and pattern of the clothes he wore on that particular occasion, hence the "Ghost," the "White Lady," the "Knight in Armour," and similar apparitions that are said to haunt certain places at stated times, periodically in fact.

I would carry the argument still further, suggesting that but for this dream state in the Spirit-world, by far the majority of the manifestations connected with Spiritualism would hardly be possible. And for the following reason. Whereas our earthly mediums are credited with the possession of senses, or of certain faculties which, in a manner, transcend, psychically, those generally allotted to mankind, so the medium of the Spirit-world may be one who has not yet completely thrown off certain material essences from which even the passage through the gate of death has failed to free him.

These two form the natural link, the natural point of contact between the two worlds, and only our most highly developed mediums may join hands, as it were, with spirits of a higher plane.

ALFRED R. SUTTON.

*The writer should note the views on this subject put forward by Miss Scatterd, and quoted in our "Lighthouse" columns last week.

This life is not the book; it is only the first chapter of the book.—G. H. MORRISON.

MR. E. J. MCCARTHY, the author of "Motionism, or the World's True Religion" (Caxton Press, Ltd., 5/- net), has made a quite new discovery, which he sets forth in twenty-four chapters mostly composed of very brief and very emphatic and ejaculatory paragraphs. The Christian trinity, he tells us, is fallacious, because one of its terms is missing. It is composed of two visible terms named matter and mind coupled together by a third term named "God," which is quite invisible. The true trinity consists of the first two terms coupled together by a third named "motion," and all "are visible to the naked eye." We wonder when mind became visible to the naked eye and when motion became an entity. Evidently we do wrong to speak of the motion of an object, as if the former belonged to the latter, and not vice versa, for we learn that matter is "motion asleep," and mind is "motion awake," and that these are "the two universal contraries which leave nothing unaccounted for." So far as we can see, they account for nothing, but have themselves to be accounted for.

THE TEACHINGS OF CLAUDE.

We well remember the social meeting of the L.S.A. held in December, 1917, in the society's old rooms in St. Martin's Lane, at which Mrs. Kelway-Bamber, in a narrative marked by refreshing clearness of diction, told how her son, Claude, killed two years before, while fighting German aeroplanes in Flanders, had given her convincing evidence of his continued presence with her—evidence which no theory of telepathy from the sub-conscious self could possibly explain away.

In November last year appeared "Claude's Book," an interesting series of communications in which the young airman gave his mother an account of some of his experiences since passing over. The narrative is now continued in "Claude's Second Book," published like the former volume through Messrs. Methuen and Co. (6/- net). In her preface to the new work Mrs. Kelway-Bamber states that some of the communications it contains were received by her through direct impression from her son, but the majority of them were given by him, as before, through the mediumship of Mrs. Osborne Leonard.

Many of the passages in the earlier work were regarded at the time by Dr. Ellis T. Powell, who contributes the introduction to the present volume, as so deep and pregnant that he could not suppose Claude to be aware of their full significance. These profundities, he says, were obviously beyond the ken of a young soldier just passed into the spirit life:—

"Since there is no miraculous bestowal of knowledge upon the spirits who pass to the other plane the inference from Claude's language was his spiritual contact with the sources of advanced knowledge and his ability to echo some of their teachings, without being alive to the full import of that which he was transmitting."

This inference Dr. Powell finds to be wholly confirmed by the second book: "The expert in the psychic sciences recognises in it at once a marked advance upon the first." But over and over again he will have "forced upon him the conclusion that Claude, though he has greatly advanced in knowledge, remains occasionally unconscious of the full purport of his words—that is to say, he is in 'touch' with exalted sources of teaching, though he has not yet fully assimilated what he has received."

Leaving the thoughtful reader to discover the more profound teachings of the book for himself and draw his own conclusions as to how far Dr. Powell is probably right in his inference concerning their source, we will select for quotation some eminently practical remarks from a chapter on "Ideal Sitters"—for Claude holds that to obtain good results sitters should be trained as well as mediums! He is speaking of methods of communication:—

"It is a purely arbitrary distinction to say that one form of communication is 'higher' than another, and that therefore 'trance' mediumship is preferable to sitting at a table, for instance; it is far less laborious and quicker for the sitters, certainly, but not necessarily 'higher' in any sense. The beauty, dignity and interest of anything received from the other side depends on the sitters. You might as well say it is 'higher' to receive a message from a friend through 'wireless' instead of through the old-fashioned telegram. After all, it's the subject-matter and not the method of transmission that is the main thing. I have been with spirit friends when they have been communicating with their people, and have heard not only tests but most interesting and beautiful facts of their life here given through the table; it has been a communion of souls fortified by love and aspiration, a common means to a sacred end. On the other hand I have heard you complain of trance addresses that consisted of a series of ordinary platitudes that anyone might have uttered without troubling to go into trance! Of course some of these methods are much more accessible to the majority of people, and are abused in consequence; but this is not a subject to play about with, it should be treated as a serious or indeed sacred matter or left severely alone; it is dangerous to play with fire, and if people lightly and carelessly invite the attendance of discarnate spirits they may live to regret it. At best they can only get frivolous, untruthful, and unmeaning messages, and at worst they are opening the door to admit uninvited guests whose influence they may find it difficult to eradicate."

A much needed warning. It applies not only to the frivolous seeker for marvels, but to the man or woman who is eaten up with spiritual pride and self-conceit. The discovery of the fact of spirit communion has for such persons a special danger. They quickly become convinced that they are in receipt of special revelations never vouchsafed to ordinary mortals and are in grave danger of losing what mental balance they ever possessed.

D. R.

MRS. MARY MOORE (Surbiton) takes exception to the allusion by V. C. Deserts, in his comments (on p. 266) on the Bishop of London's Hyde Park address, to "the Paines and Ingersolls and other atheistic writers." She writes: "It seems strange how this mistake can arise, because every page of Paine's goes to prove—and is written to prove—his belief in the great Eternal God, creator of all things in this marvellous universe."

REINCARNATION: SOME REPLIES.

Mrs. de Crespigny's recent article on this subject and the reply by a King's Counsel, on p. 286, have drawn contributions from other correspondents, of which, however, we can only find space for abridged reports.

Mr. W. Boyd Shannon quotes some of the observations of "King's Counsel," and comments on them thus:—

"No evidence of any description can be produced." If the teachings of religion be taken as a proof—and this includes all religions—there is considerable evidence. To take only the Christian revelation, there is the direct statement by Christ: "Ye must be born again." Why so direct and unambiguous a saying should be supposed to mean something other than it states, is difficult to understand.

"The assumption that reincarnation is necessary in order to prevent injustice overlooks the fact that compensation can be made in the spirit world for inequality in earth life." How can it be possible—on a plane where matter, as we understand it, is not—for a murderer to learn not to murder, or for the glutton and the drunkard to learn the necessary self-denial, or for the coward to learn heroism and self-sacrifice and the ability to meet and bear pain?

All the trials of the flesh have use in educating and perfecting the character. Life is lived for experience. But if it be lived without gaining those necessary conquests, the experience must be passed through again, in order that the necessary lesson may be learnt. It can only be attained by conquest of the particular weakness.

With regard to the reincarnation of those who have no wish to be reincarnated, this is impossible. It is the desire to be, which is one of the principal causes.

Mr. J. Scott Battams, writing as a mere student, but after some years of study, confesses that the truth of reincarnation is with him rather an intuition than a logically reasoned conviction. He says:—

I have no doubt—though, of course, no proof—that there are, and ever have been, advanced souls to whom re-birth is a matter of *knowledge*, and that the gaining of this personal assurance is one of the first steps demanded of the neophyte in the occult schools. It would seem that the most convincing arguments for the truth of reincarnation come along philosophical lines. . . . I venture to suggest that Spiritualism would gain—especially on the phenomenal side—if its devotees, instead of ignoring the theosophical and occult teachings, were to borrow some of the light they cast on the obscure problems which confront both schools of thought.

Constance Gill (Muswell Hill) sends an inspirational message received from a departed friend in reply to a question on the subject. The answer was to the effect that there is no fixed law in the matter. If any spirits felt—and some did so feel—that to be back in a material body would help them in their progress they could come back. But there was no need for them to do so, seeing that every chance of rising and of becoming more spiritual was given them on their own side.

Mrs. de Crespigny writes:—

My remarks in *LIGHT* on reincarnation seem to have been a little misunderstood. It was in no way an attempt to write exhaustively on the subject, but merely a *review* of Mr. Sinnett's article in the "Nineteenth Century" for August—which I would bring to the notice of any really interested, one way or the other, in the theory of re-birth on this earth.

MR. COATES'S TOUR IN THE NORTH.

Mr. James Coates, who has returned to London, gives the following account of his recent experiences in the North:—

Shortly after my arrival in Scotland, I was asked by the President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists to occupy their platform on August 24th. I found that the officials of the Glasgow Association worked together very harmoniously, and all their undertakings were marked by success. They now hold their meetings in the fine McLellan Galleries in Sauchiehall-street, where large audiences are the rule. I was struck by the good results achieved in Glasgow, and by the decision arrived at to take, as an additional step in propaganda work, the Langside Hall for three months for lectures and expositions on Spiritualism. A leading provincial speaker and clairvoyant will be present at the opening of this hall in October.

It gave me much pleasure to revisit Belfast, where I was the speaker for the Association in George's Hall, High-street. This society has difficulties to contend with, because it is not able to obtain a large building. It was found impossible to get the use of a cinema hall for Sunday services, so strong was the prejudice against Spiritualism. Ulster Hall, one of the finest in Ireland, could only be obtained occasionally.

On my return from Ireland I again had the pleasure of being on the platform of the Glasgow society. Mrs. Cannock, from London, was the speaker and clairvoyant. Her address was listened to with deep interest, and her vivid clairvoyant descriptions impressed the large gathering that was present.

MENDING THE ETHERIC BODY.

A SPIRIT'S "CURIOUS TASK."

Mr. C. E. Willis (Camberwell) forwards the following automatic script received by him recently, regarding the rehabilitation of individuals who have passed over suffering from deformity or disfigurement. He says, "The information I have received could no doubt be tested by others who are in a position to make inquiries of their guides. It would be extremely interesting if the matter could be pursued further by other investigators."

The script (received August 16th, 1919) is as follows:—

I have a curious task to follow. You must know that many people here are in a very damaged state owing to the war and my work is to make them understand that their new limbs will come in course of time. You see, that a deformity is always reproduced in the etheric body because the deformity is part of the personality of the being, and he or she could not live without it. This will sound most strange to you, I am sure. You must understand that our bodies are photographed on our egos so that your body is permanent until reconstructed or, rather, rehabilitated. Your deformities are actually part of yourself until your spirit and concurrently your etheric body becomes mended and purified so as to be capable of reconstruction without altering in an adverse way the predominant higher spiritual characteristics of the ego itself.

Now, when a man passes over who is a hunchback, he is still a hunchback here until he has become spiritually advanced enough to influence his etheric body, irrespective of the influence of earthly recollections, but a man who has lost his limbs in battle goes through a different process altogether; he is at once awakened with his limbs whole again if he only lost them a short while before his passing over; but if he lost them some time before, he has to become accustomed to being without them here for a little while and then he goes through a spiritual operation and the surgeons here, by prayer and spiritual efforts, reproduce his limbs for him sound and whole as they were in life in your plane.

Our contributor will find support for the message he received in "So Saith the Spirit," by a King's Counsel. On page 187, the author says:—

"In the course of a message from Amra on this date (December 1st, 1918) he mentioned that on first passing over the spirit-body possesses the blemishes of the earth-body. He illustrated this from the case of Byron, who, on first waking up in the spirit-world after passing over from this life, found that his spirit-body had the same malformation of one foot as his earth-body has possessed."

The message proceeds to tell how Amra rectified the malformation.

THE ESSENCE OF LIFE—ITS UPWARD IMPULSE.

We cannot too seriously and constantly realise that the terrible ordeal through which the nations have so lately passed was the actual trial of strength between the two great philosophies which have divided the civilised world between them since Darwin demonstrated the fact that creation is carried on by means of evolution.

Because this fact finally negated man's earlier belief that creation was effected once for all by a series of separate Divine acts which took place long ago, the temptation to deny a good purpose in creation was too strong for many minds, gloomily impressed by the evidence on every hand of that remorseless struggle in nature which Darwin unfortunately described as the struggle "for existence." It is true that all nature, as it exists to-day, exists only as the result of that struggle; but nevertheless existence was not the object of the struggle. Creatures could not struggle until they already had existence, and in the course of the struggle they were all constantly risking their existence. For what? For betterment of one kind or another.

So the truth is that all nature exists, as it is to-day, only by its ceaseless striving in the past for better things. Since our present condition of existence is the result of the struggle, it may seem a small point to insist upon, that the struggle is misnamed the Struggle "for Existence"; but it makes all the difference between a philosophy of Life and a philosophy of Death.

My point leads at once to several questions. Why does nature struggle ceaselessly for better things? Why were not creatures, having existence, content to remain as they were originally? Why cannot anything that lives be permanently contented in this world? At once we see that the very essence of Life is its upward impulse, which is the creative force of the world.

The fact that all nature seems to have been at strife from the beginning does not affect the fact that Life is a good force which is always improving the world and will achieve its final purpose of creation here by the establishment of universal loving-kindness on earth.

—E. KAY ROBINSON, in "The Meaning of Life."

Be yourself; do not lean or apologise.—O. S. MARDEN

TO-MORROW'S SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Marylebone Spiritualist Association, Ltd., Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W. 1. — 6.30, Dr. W. J. Vanstone. October 5th, Mr. A. Vout Peters.

The London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, W.2. — 11, Mr. F. W. Beard; 6.30, Mr. Ernest Hunt. Wednesday, October 1st, 7.30, Mr. Robert King.

Church of the Spirit, Windsor-road, Denmark Hill, S.E. — 11, Mrs. Mary Gordon; 6.30, Mr. Nickels, of Luton.

Walthamstow.—342, Hoe-street.—7, Mr. Percy Smyth, address and clairvoyance.

Shepherd's Bush.—73, Becklow-road.—11, public circle; 7, harvest festival. Thursday, 8, Mrs. Brown.

Reading Spiritual Mission.—16, Blagrove-street.—11.30 and 6.45, Mr. Arthur Lawrence.

Croydon.—117b, High-street.—11, Mr. P. Scholey; 6.30, Mrs. Jennie Walker.

Kingston-on-Thames.—Bishop's Hall, Thames-street.—6.30, Mrs. E. Neville, address and clairvoyance.

Lewisham.—The Priory, High-street.—6.30, Mr. R. Boddington.

Peckham.—Lausanne-road.—7, Mrs. Mary Gordon. Thursday, 8.15, Mrs. Graddon Kent.

Wimbledon Spiritual Mission, 4 & 5, Broadway.—6.30, Mrs. Alice Harper. Wednesday, October 1st, 7.30, Mrs. Jamrach.

Brighton.—Athenaeum Hall.—11.15 and 7, Mrs. Jamrach, addresses and descriptions; 3, Lyceum. Wednesday, 8, public meeting, Mr. Cager.

Woodwich and Plumstead.—1, Villas-road, Plumstead.—7, Mr. Phelps, address. Wednesday, 8, members' meeting, annual election of officers.

Battersea.—45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction.—11.15, circle service; 6.30, Mr. and Mrs. Brownjohn. October 2nd, 8.15, Mr. Sturdy, address, Mrs. Holloway, clairvoyance.

Brighton Spiritualist Brotherhood.—Old Steine Hall.—11.30 and 7, also Monday, 7.15, addresses and clairvoyance, Miss G. Butcher. Tuesday, 3 p.m., public circle, Miss Butcher. Thursday, 7.15, questions and clairvoyance.

Lyceum every Sunday, 3 p.m. Next week Nurse Graham.

Holloway.—Grove-dale Hall (near Highgate Tube Station). —To-day (Saturday), 7.15, whist drive, silver collection at door in aid of building fund. Sunday, 11, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Pulham; 3, Lyceum; 7, Mrs. A. Boddington. Wednesday, Mrs. Crowder. October 5th, 11 a.m., Mr. T. O. Todd; 7, Mr. G. Prior.

READING.—Mr. Percy R. Street celebrated, on the 20th inst., his 13th anniversary as the Resident Speaker of the Reading Spiritual Mission, when the annual harvest festival was also held. The hall was profusely decorated with a splendid collection of the choicest fruits and flowers. Mr. Street took for his subjects for the three special services, "The Golden Harvest," "Spirit Workers and Spirit Labours" and "A Vision of the Future." On the following day the harvest produce was sold and realised the sum of £22, which, with the collection, was placed to the credit of the National Memorial Church Fund.

Spiritualist Services are held in LONDON on Sundays as follows.

	A.M.	P.M.
*Battersea, 45, St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction ...	11-30	6-30
*Brixton, 143a, Stockwell Park Road ...	...	7-0
Camberwell, People's Church, Windsor Road, Denmark Hill ...	11-0	6-30
*Clapham, Reform Club, St. Luke's Road ...	11-0	7-0
Croydon, Gymnasium Hall, High Street ...	11-0	6-30
*Ealing, 5a, Uxbridge Road, Ealing Broadway ...	...	7-0
Forest Gate, E.L.S.A., Earham Hall, Earham Grove ...	...	7-0
*Fulham, 12, Lettice Street, Munster Road ...	11-15	7-0
Hackney, 240a, Amburst Road ...	...	7-0
Harrow, Co-operative Hall, Mason's Avenue, Wealdstone ...	...	6-30
*Kingston, Assembly Rooms, Bishop's Hall, Thames Street ...	...	6-30
Lewisham, The Priory, 410, High Street ...	...	6-30
*Little Ilford, Third Avenue Corner, Church Road ...	...	6-30
London Spiritual Mission, 13, Pembroke Place, Bayswater, W. ...	11-0	6-30
*Manor Park Spiritual Church, Shrewsbury Road ...	11-0	6-30
Marylebone, Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour-street, W.1. ...	...	6-30
*Peckham, Lausanne Hall, Lausanne Road ...	11-30	7-0
*Plaistow, Spiritualists' Hall, Breemar Road ...	...	6-30
Plumstead, Perseverance Hall, Villas Road ...	...	7-0
Richmond, Castle Assembly Rooms ...	...	7-0
*Stratford, Idmiston Road, Forest Lane ...	...	7-0
*Tottenham, "The Chestnuts," 634, High Road ...	...	7-0
*Upper Holloway, Grove-dale Hall, Grove-dale Road ...	11-15	7-0
*Wimbledon, 4 and 5, Broadway	6-30
*Lyceum (Spiritualists' Sunday School) at 3 p.m.		

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